Stories: More True than Fact

Architecture, History, Storytelling

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Foreword

India has nearly 4000 years of history and too much architectural heritage. Conservation of buildings is a fairly new development in India when compared to the Western world. Scientific systems and the theoretical issues as laid down by the International Charters fall short in terms of execution when dealing with our heritage.India has a huge population which makes the manpower cheaper when compared to machinery. Due to the inclemental tropical climate, regular annual maintenance rather than occasional conservation is needed to maintain the buildings. Therefore India has a building tradition that effectively responded to these issues. These traditions are in variance with international norms and are thus not accepted as correct.

India is also a developing country and there are many issues like poverty, illiteracy, health, infra-structure development, and waste management which need to be addressed before many can be spared for conservation. One can argue that 'heritage' can be a very useful commodity in drawing tourism and improving economy. But even for tourism the priority would be to develop an infrastructure that could sustain the increased pressure on these locations. Finally, the world view of Indians who believe in rebirth, temporality of the body, and the transmigration of the soul, do not attach any importance to their mortal bodies or any other material objects like buildings. It is common in India for ancient temples to be replaced by new structures, which is against all tenets of modern conservation theories. In such a situation, with a world view of material impermanence, a strong continuity of traditions and crafts and cheap man power, pressures of the developing world, conservation, as we know it, often takes a back seat.

But culture, including architecture, has survived in India through traditional systems of maintenance and also through art, literature, stories and storytelling techniques. Many old buildings and sacred historical places like Ayodhya, Lanka, Vrindavan, Benares, and Kurukshetra have lived on in the memories of people where building fabric may have changed, but the sites have endured. This study attempts to understand the stories and the art and craft of storytelling in India that has helped in preserving architecture through the ages with the intention of using it in the future as an effective method for conservation.

Report for Diploma in Storytelling, Kathalaya, Banglore, India, 2024

Introduction

Once upon a time, long long ago,
Grandmothers told stories sitting under the sky around a fire,

Tangible traditions

Some of these stories were drawn inside caves,
They were written on clay tablets,
Carved in stone,
Priests and rich men wrote books on palm leaves, tree barks, cloth, and paper,
They were richly illustrated by paintings,
Symbols making them easy to read and understand,

Oral Traditions

These stories were taken to the common people through songs,
Open air theatres,
Paintings and scrolls,
And puppet shows.

Stories (Indian epics, legends, folklore, etc.)

The stories were of gods and saints,
Of kings and queens,
Of people from cities and towns,
Of animals and plants.

The Printing Revolution

But the singing and dancing stopped. Painting stopped. Stories stopped.
Grandmothers were unhappy, children were unhappy.
The printing press took over. The camera took over.
There was sadness but also joy,
Now stories came from far, far lands,
Transported through books,

So Stories continued

Of castles and fairies,
Goblins and elves,
Grandmothers were happy, and children were happy,
They could now read and hear stories from far, far, lands!

(Stories and storytelling techniques have been selected to present a history of architecture in India. Architecture became the setting for most of these stories and its history was transported through time and space through these stories)

What are Stories?

Will Storr (The Science of Storytelling, UK.2019) writes; We know how this ends. You're going to die and so will everyone you love. And then there will be heat death. Human life, in all its noise and hubris, will be rendered meaningless for eternity. But that's not how we live our lives. Humans might be in unique possession of the knowledge that our existence is essentially meaningless, but we carry on as if in ignorance of it. We beetle away happily, into our minds, hours and days, with the fact of the void hovering over us. To look directly into it, and respond with an entirely rational descent into despair, is to be diagnosed with a mental-health condition, categorised as somehow faulty.

The cure for the horror is story. Our brains distract us from the terrible truth by filling our lives with hopeful goals and encouraging us to strive for them. What we want, and the ups and downs of our struggle to get it, is the story of us all. It gives our existence the illusion of meaning and turn our gaze from the dread. There's simply no way to understand the human world without stories. They fill our newspapers, our law courts, our sporting arenas, the lyrics to our songs, our private thoughts and public conversations and our waking and sleeping dreams. Stories are everywhere. Stories are us.

It's story that makes us human. Recent research suggests language evolved principally to swap 'social information' back when we were living in Stone Age tribes. In other words we gossip. We'd tell tales about moral rights and wrongs of other people, punish bad behaviour, reward the good, and thereby keep everyone cooperating and the tribe in check. Stories about people being heroic or villainous, and the emotions of joy and outrage they triggered, were crucial to human survival. We're wired to enjoy them.

Some researchers believe grandparents came to perform a vital role in such tribes: elders told different kinds of stories about ancestor heroes, exciting quests, and spirits and magic, that helped children navigate their physical, spiritual, and moral worlds. It is from these stories that complex human culture emerged. When we started farming and our tribes settled down and slowly merged into states, these tales morphed into great religions that had the power to hold large number of humans together. Still, today, modern nations are principally defined by the stories we tell about our collective selves; our victories and defeats; our heroes and foes.

We experience our day to day lives in story mode. The brain creates a world for us to live in and populates it with allies and villains. It turns the chaos and bleakness of reality into a simple, hopeful tale, and at the centre it places its start, me, who it sets on a series of goals that become the plot of our lives. Story is what brain does. It is a story processor, not a logic processor, writes psychologist Professor Jonathan. Story emerges from human minds as naturally as breath emerges from between human lips. This may sound strange, but is true. Looking for stories is simply a matter of peering inwards, at the mind itself, and seeing how it works.

Types of Stories

Storr continues to explain how stories were preserved. Babylon, 587 BC. A group of 4,000 men and women were forced out of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar II. These Judea's journeyed long, and suffered, before finally finding a place to rest in the ancient city of Nippur. But they never forgot their beloved home. In exile, the Judea's determined to keep alive the customs of their people: their moral laws, their rituals, their language, their ways of living, eating and being. In order to do this it was essential that they preserve their stories.

Because most of these stories only existed orally, Judean scribes began writing them down on a series of scrolls. As they began writing, the ancient myths and fables became connected and the scribes turned them into a cause and effect tale. It began with the creation of the world, and the first humans, Adam and Eve, and continued to include their occupation of Jerusalem. This story helped the tribe function as one cooperative unit and prescribed behaviour patterns helped them differentiate themselves from other tribes.

Seventy one years after their banishment, the Judeans finally had an opportunity to return to their ancestral homeland. But when they returned, led by a scribe named Ezra, they were horrified. Those who had remained were not following the tribal laws about purity, worship, etc. For Ezra, such tribal decay was a catastrophe. Ezra had a wooden stage erected in a public place and sent out word something important was going to happen. When people gathered, Ezra dramatically presented the scrolls on which the tribal narrative had been written. The people immediately bowed their heads to the ground. These scrolls and stories were treated as if they were sacred. And a religion, Judaism, was formed.

This might have been the first time a written story was treated as sacred, but human tribes have been bound together by such stories for ages. In our hunter gatherer pasts, much storytelling would have taken place around the campfire, under the stars. Being told and retold they would take the form of a myth. Some stories would describe the nature of heroic behaviour and become legends and folktales. Fables and fairy tales, that feature animals, mystical creatures, plants, or forces of natures were anthropomorphised to give moral lessons to children or for their amusement. Parables were stories meant to teach important moral lessons. Before the stories were written, within the oral tradition, epics or long narrative poems, concerning significant events of a nation were important works. In India they are the Ramayan and the Mahabharata. The earliest 'books', now called manuscripts, were written on palm and other leaves, and illustrated by hand drawn paintings.

The Art and Craft of Storytelling

Before modern writing systems developed came pictograms in caves and on rocks carried stories. These were very simple images that represented something. They were built up to create a phrase, so a drawing of a man followed by a drawing of a blade or spear followed by a picture of a mammoth would represent the sentence: "The man uses a spear to hunt the mammoth." Cave art, generally, the numerous paintings and engravings found in caves and shelters dating back to the Ice Age roughly between 40,000 and 14,000 years ago and the art discovered there was deemed by experts to be the first know 'written' artefacts or stories by modern humans. Most cave art consists of paintings made with either red or black pigment. The reds were made with iron oxides whereas manganese dioxide and charcoal were used for the blacks. Cave art is generally considered to have a symbolic or religious function, sometimes both however, the exact meanings of the images remain unknown.

In the Ancient Near East, clay tablets were used as a writing medium throughout the Bronze Age (2000 BC) and well into the Iron Age (550 BC).Characters were imprinted on a wet clay tablet with a stylus often made of reed (reed pen). Once written upon, many tablets were dried in the sun or air or fired in hot kilns. Collections of these clay documents made up the first archives. They were at the root of the first libraries.Text on clay tablets took the forms of myths, fables, essays, hymns, proverbs, epic poetry, business records, laws, plants, and animals. What these clay tablets allowed was for individuals to record who and what was significant. An example of these great stories was Epic of Gilgamesh (2100 BC). They used cuneiform, a writing style that used symbols to represent sounds rather than the things they were describing.The first evidence of an alphabet like the one we know today being used was the Phoenician alphabet. The system used symbols to represent consonants and was spread across the Mediterranean by the travelling merchants who used it to keep records. From this alphabet came the Aramaic script and the Greek alphabet, which led to the Latin one we use today that features symbols for both consonants and vowels.

Perhaps the next great development in the history of writing was technological. The invention of pencils and pens, starting with reeds dipped in ink, meant people could move away from imprinting text in clay tablets or carving it in stone, and so made writing far more efficient followed by the printing revolution which allowed the mass publication of writing.But before the printing press became widespread books were produced as manuscripts. These were hand-written books, largely produced by scribes, monks and other scholars, and were valuable possessions, made of expensive materials, and individually commissioned by a king or noble. It was a painstaking, time-consuming process that could only be undertaken by a skilled scribe, and there could therefore were rare and expensive that only the elite could read. The writing by hand was itself a craft, now largely extinct. These books were illustrated by colourful paintings.

In Germany, around 1440, the goldsmith Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable-type printing press, which started the Printing Revolution. A single Renaissance movable-type printing press could produce up to 3,600 pages per workday, compared to forty by hand-printing and a few by hand-copying.By 1500, printing presses in operation throughout Western Europe had already produced more than twenty million volumes. In the 16th century, with presses spreading further afield, their output rose tenfold to an estimated 150 to 200 million copies. The arrival of the 'press' in the Renaissance introduced the era of mass communication, which permanently altered the structure of society. The relatively unrestricted circulation of information captured the masses and threatened the power of political and religious authorities. In the 19th century, the replacement of the hand-operated Gutenberg-style press by steam-powered rotary presses allowed printing on an industrial scale.

Babu K. Vergese (From Palm leaves to the Printed Word) writes it was Christian missionaries, who first introduced printing and publishing in India to produce the Bible in the several regional languages. As early as 1542, Francis Xavier, a Spaniard, was teaching the Bible in Tharangambadi (Tranquebar), Tamil Nadu. Also, when the Viceroy of Goa, on behalf of King Joan III of Portugal, opened schools for Indians, books had to be provided. Thus, pressure was put on Portugal by Francis Xavier to dispatch printing presses to India, Ethiopia and Japan. Meanwhile, the Emperor of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) requested the king of Portugal to send a press along with the missionaries. Thus the first batch of Jesuit missionaries left for Ethiopia on March 29, 1556. En route, they arrived in Goa on September 6, 1556. But, while they were preparing to proceed to Ethiopia, news reached them that the Ethiopian Emperor was not keen to receive the missionaries. Thus, as luck would have it, the press stayed in Goa and was set up at the College of St. Paul in Goa. The first literature ever printed in India was released on November 6, 1556. The missionaries established a number of printing presses in many parts of India, triggering a language and literature revolution. Within a hundred years of the printing of Gutenberg's Bible in Germany, India initiated fashioning of types for the many Indian languages.If the location of the earliest printing presses in India were plotted on the map, it will be found that they were all located along the coastline of peninsular India. Goa, Cochin, Punnaikkyal (near Kanyakumari), Vypicottai (near Kodungalloor), and Amblakkadu (near Thrissur), were the places along the west coast. Tharangambadi (Tranquebar), Madras, Fort William, Calcutta and Serampore along the east coast represent the shaping of Indian printing. Bombay contributed its share towards the second phase of the vigorous growth of early Indian printing. For most of the Indian languages, the pioneer publishers were Bible translators. These Christian missionaries also produced 86 dictionaries, 115 grammar books and 45 journals in 73 Indian languages. The work of the Missionaries eventually helped in bringing traditional regional knowledge from palm-leaves and other manuscripts into the houses of ordinary people, and familiarised them with their cultural heritage. This had a tremendous socio-political impact, leading to enlightenment and empowerment which finally led to the independence of India.

At the same time, the press slowly eclipsed the oral traditions of communication that included both visual and performing arts and other local crafts. Paper replaced palm leaf manuscripts and hand written systems like calligraphy. Paintings were replaced with illustrations and new genre of graphic design, which were soon replaced with photographs and computer images, with books themselves giving way to video and films. Globalisation has added a new repertoire of stories which were transported through books, films, and other digital mediums to reach a wider audience. Old stories which were recorded in print are now made into films and screened in different mediums. However, soon the loss of 'local' stories, now referred to as folklore, was felt worldwide, and the revival of oral traditions of storytelling and various arts and crafts associated with them started.

The loss and revival through folklore and storytelling

The word folklore, a compound of folk and lore, was coined in 1846 by the Englishman William Thoms, who contrived the term as a replacement for the contemporary terminology of "popular antiquities" or "popular literature". The second half of the word, lore, comes from Old English lār 'instruction'. It is the knowledge and traditions of a particular group, frequently passed along by word of mouth.Folklore began to distinguish itself as an autonomous discipline during the period of romantic nationalism, in Europe. A particular figure in this development was Johann Gottfried von Herder, whose writings in the 1770s presented oral traditions as organic processes grounded in locale. After the German states were invaded by Napoleonic France, Herder's approach was adopted by many of his fellow Germans, who systematised the recorded folk traditions, and used them in their process of nation building. This process was enthusiastically embraced by smaller nations, like Finland, Estonia, and Hungary, which were seeking political independence from their dominant neighbours.

Folklore, as a field of study, further developed among 19th century European scholars, who were contrasting tradition with the newly developing modernity. Its focus was the oral folklore of the rural peasant populations, which were considered as residue and survivals of the past that continued to exist within the lower strata of society. The "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" of the Brothers Grimm (first published 1812) is the best known but by no means only collection of verbal folklore of the European peasantry of that time. This interest in stories, sayings and songs continued throughout the 19th century and aligned the fledgling discipline of folkloristics with literature and mythology. By the turn into the 20th century the number and sophistication of folklore studies and folklorists had grown both in Europe, with in the field of humanities, and in North America within social sciences. By the turn of the 19th century India was not far behind in reviving its folklore.

In the preface of his book written in 1883, Folk Tales of Bengal, Rev. Lal Behari Day, a Christian missionary from Hooghly College, writes: In my Peasant Life in Bengal I make the peasant boy Govinda spend some hours every evening in listening to stories told by an old woman, who was called Sambhu's mother, and who was the best story-teller in the village. On reading that passage, Captain R. C. Temple, of the Bengal Staff Corps, son of the distinguished Indian administrator Sir Richard Temple, wrote to me to say how interesting it would be to get a collection of those unwritten stories which old women in India recite to little children in the evenings, and to ask whether I could not make such a collection. As I was no stranger to the Mährchen of the Brothers Grimm, to the Norse Tales so admirably told by Dasent, to Arnason's Icelandic Stories translated by Powell, to the Highland Stories done into English by Campbell, and to the fairy stories collected byother writers, and as I believed that the collection suggested would be a contribution, however slight, to that daily increasing literature of folk-lore and comparative mythology which, like comparative philosophy, proves that the swarthy and half-naked peasant on the banks of the Ganges is a cousin, albeit of the hundredth remove, to the fair-skinned and well-dressed Englishman on the banks of the Thames, I readily caught up the idea and cast about for materials…None of my authorities knew English; they all told the stories in Bengali, and Itranslated them into English when I came home. I heard many more stories than those contained in the following pages; but I rejected a great many, as they appeared to me to contain spurious additions to the original stories which I had heard when a boy. I have reason to believe that the stories given in this book are a genuine sample of the old old stories told by old Bengali women from age to age through a hundred generations…

In a spirit of nationalism, Rabindranath Tagore notes in his introduction to Thakurmar Jhuli (1907), that there was a dire need for folk literature of Bengal to be revived because the only such works available to the reading public of the time were European fairytales and their translations. He expressed the need for a swadeshi or indigenous folk literature that would remind the people of Bengal of their rich oral traditions. He writes:

Can there be anything more quintessentially indigenous than Thakurmar Jhuli in our country? Sadly this bag of mouth watering tales is being supplanted by imports from England. Foreign fairy tales are gradually replacing our own…

If you look through their present day bags, you are likely to come across notebooks on Martin's Ethics or Burke's treatise on the French Revolution, instead of the erstwhile fairy tales and simple stories based on everyday life…

With most of the elements of Bengal's ancient culture, including its festive occasions, open air jatra performances, songs and dances, and professional narrators recounting mythological stories, languishing like dying rivers…The children are being pushed into the world of books, no longer able to enjoy the deeply instructive tales emanating from the hearts and tongues of loving mothers and grandmothers…I would like to offer my gratitude to Dashinaranjan babu! In transcribing the oral tales of the grandmothers into printed words, he has amazingly succeeded in retaining the flavour of the original…

Initially most of the collection and compilation of stories was done under the branch of Indology, Sociology, Anthropology, Archaeology, Folklology, and similar subject first by Western scholars and then increasingly by Indian scholars from all states and languages. However the printing press did not only threaten the oral tradition of stories but also the traditions of storytelling which included many traditional arts and crafts like painting, dancing, singing, music, and theatre, not only in India but all over the world. The global Storytelling Revival that tried to revive these arts, can be said to have begun in the 1960s, especially in the USA and the UK. At this time in the West, there were many people who wanted to get in touch with each other as human beings, with their histories, and with nature, that was greatly threatened by entertainment from TV. With the social media taking over the real world, revival of such traditions has taken greater importance. Kathalaya, established in 1998 by Geeta Ramanujam, is one of the many organisations that became part of the storytelling revival in

India and continues to train students in the oral Indian tradition of storytelling. This research is a part of such a course.

Historic overview of stories in India

Sweta Prakash in Indian Storytelling Traditions (2016) informs that the genesis of stories of India can be traced back to nearly 4000 BC during the Indus Valley Civilisation or the Harappan period. Archeological artefacts such as the dancing girl and bull seals point to the existence of an advanced culture during this period. The worship of the sacred bull, which has its origins during this period, continue to this day. But it was between 3000 BC to 300 BC in the Vedic period that most of these 'stories' were compiled referred to as the four important Vedas and the Upanishads that dealt with philosophical ideas and religious practises and were also called shrutis, as heard.

Buddhism and Jainism during the Mauryan empire in 320 BC challenged the Vedic culture and through the stories of Buddha and Mahavir. The teachings and stories were orally transmitted from teachers to students through a guru shishya tradition in gurukuls. Clay tablets and stone edicts of this period were the early indicators of the written word. The Panchtantra was composed during this period which is a series of moral fables that were meant to illustrate to princes the central principles of political science through animal stories. In a reaction to these growing new religions, Hinduism saw a revival through the Bhakti Movement. Stories and legends of God Vishnu and God Shiva were popularised by wandering poets and musicians. These stories made abstract philosophical and distant gods more personal and accessible to the general public. The two epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata were composed during this period along with many Puranans, each dedicated to a specific god or goddess. The two epics were considered as the historical account of India, Itihas, and all of these including the Puranas, were now clubbed together as smritis, as remembered.

By the Gupta period in 320 AD, famously called the golden period for the arts and culture in India, ancients legends and traditions were documentedin regional languages. Large scale temple building happened all over India, and Buddhism gradually declined. Philosopher sages like Sankara (700 AD) and Ramanuja (1017 AD) spread philosophical ideas of the Hindu religion. The attack of Mahmud of Ghazni and other muslim invaders, and Islam, after 1001 AD, saw a second renaissance of the Bhakti Movement and new sects like Sufism and Sikhism emerged and their stories of religious tolerance were taken to the masses. The Mughal rulers, after the 16th century, made great efforts to integrat themselves with the Indian society and great advancement was seen in the fields of art and architecture. Rajasthani and Persian aesthetics combined to produce great works of architecture, paintings, dance, and music. Exquisite miniature paintings give us stories of legendary figures, both of Indian kings and queens. The later rulers, including the British, used this style when writing historical accounts of their own rule. The stories changed but the traditional systems of storytelling continued. Architecture continued a silent witness and the backdrop for these stories, every reinventing its form and aesthetics with the changing times.

Traditional storytelling employed music, dance, recitation, theatre, painting, and props such as puppets. One can see some of these forms today, but unfortunately, they have shifted out from their original context in villages and towns to festivals organised by the government to conserve them and promote them for tourism.

As part of the project, I was able to study some of these formats like patachitra paintings and recitals of Bengal and Orissa, yakshagana puppet show fromSouth India, Ravan chaya puppet show from Kerala, Gotipua dance of Orissa, Madhubani paintings from Bihar, Kalighat paintings of Kolkata, padh paintings from Rajasthan, baul singers from Bengal, and palm leaf manuscript engravings, the details of which are attached later. Most of the stories narrated through these medium were taken from the Mahabharata, Ramayana, or the Puranas. They were presented by artists from all parts of India. Some of the stories were local folktales and were told in their regional languages by the artists. Most artists were trained by their fathers and had learnt the arts and crafts from early childhood. Almost all felt that their crafts of storytelling was just a vocation as they could not earn enough from it to give them a livelihood.

The role of storytelling has been taken over by books, television, and the social media. The repertoire of stories has increased to include both traditional stories from India, modern stories, and traditional stories from other cultures. However, it is the traditional arts and crafts like painting, etching, storytelling through various media that has seen a sharp decline. As a result the traditional storytellers and their stories, are being replaced by young storytellers who have brought in innovations and freshness to hold the attention of the new generations. Stories and storytelling, has also proved to be a very good medium to teach both students and adults, and to re-capture the human connect in a digital world. Whatever the story and whichever the medium, physical or digital, storytelling remains a compelling mode of communication between people and cultures. But how, when, and why did architecture loose its essential connection with these stories?

Architecture, History, and Storytelling

All human stories from time immemorial have captured the geographical essence of their locations manifested in the food they gathered and ate, the clothes they wore to suit the climate, and lived in houses that they built to shelter themselves from nature. They lived in caves and soon moved to constructing houses from natural materials like grass, mud, and weeds. More buildings were added as society started developing and new construction materials and advancement in technology soon made building and construction an independent area of expertise and its study over time came to be called architecture and its development was and is studied under architectural history.

The history of architecture, as we know it today, was pieced together for the first time by 19th century British scholars attempted to create a fresh historical tradition of India which totally eclipsed the earlier Indian traditions of history writing, Itihasa by Hindus historians, and Tarikh by the Muslims. The historical traditions of India which existed down to the 19th century were critiqued by the English as being 'unscientific' and 'ahistorical'_mainly because the Itihasa though rich in socio-cultural traditions, were indifferent to chronology and topography. The Tarikh on the other hand, though chronologically correct, was dominated by prejudices towards their religion and monarch. These histories were not 'objective' and 'scientific' and therefore not acceptable by the Europeans and was replaced by the 'modern' traditions laid down by the British and continued by the later Indian scholars.

But the 'science' of history, writes Beyazilt Akman in Fiction or History? A Brief Theoretical Elaboration on Historical Fiction and Fictional History, does not capture the 'wrath of a king, the suffering of a peasant, or the heroism of a warrior.' The author presents an alternative to this scientific history writing in a work of historical fiction, which he elaborates, 'is first and foremost a story; a work of architecture. Historians cannot fill in the gaps of their research with creative imagination, writers can.' The other important difference between the scientific history and historical fiction, as per Akman, is that stories offer a 'truth' whereas history only offers 'facts'. Historical fiction goes beyond mere facts and pursues larger questions about life and the human condition. Thus, when historical fiction follows this 'truth', it also, paradoxically, has the opportunity to capture more 'facts' than a historical can ever achieve. In the replacing of the historical epics of India, with the 'scientific history' much of the 'truth' was lost, especially in the case of architectural history, and it is thus important to look at 'history' as a story, not simply as facts for the whole truth to emerge.

"Truth is not merely a matter of fact. Truth is the spirit which underlines all appearances and materialises in facts and deeds; truth is a hidden and spiritual force and facts are only modes of its operations…A characteristic legend, or tradition, or myth concerning a city, or a man, or a woman, when rightly interpreted, will often express more truth than will barrels and bales of statistical facts."

(Michael Williams. Opportunities in Historical Fiction. 1992)

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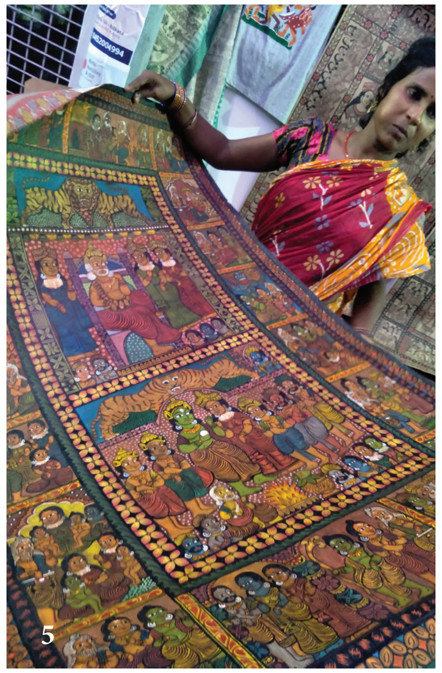
Figure 01-04: Storytelling workshops held by Kathalaya, 2023.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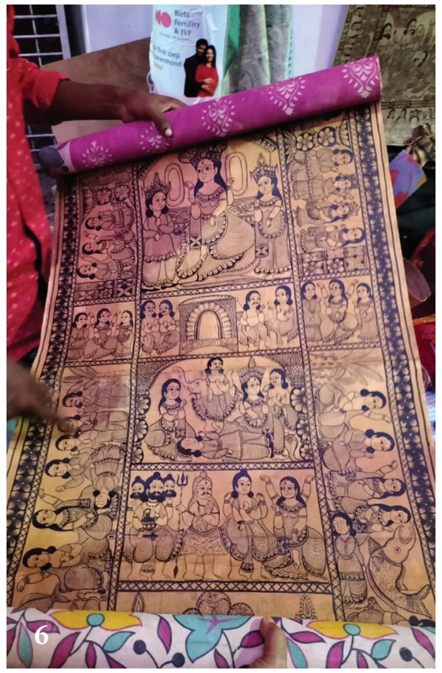
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Figure 05-08:Jarano Patachitra artists display their paintings during the Durga Puja festival. The wife is seen holding a Ramayan painting scroll, costing two lakh rupees, and the artist Seramuddin Chitrakar narrates the story of the Goddess Mansha Devi.

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JARANO PATACHITRA
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Pin - 721140, West Bengal, India

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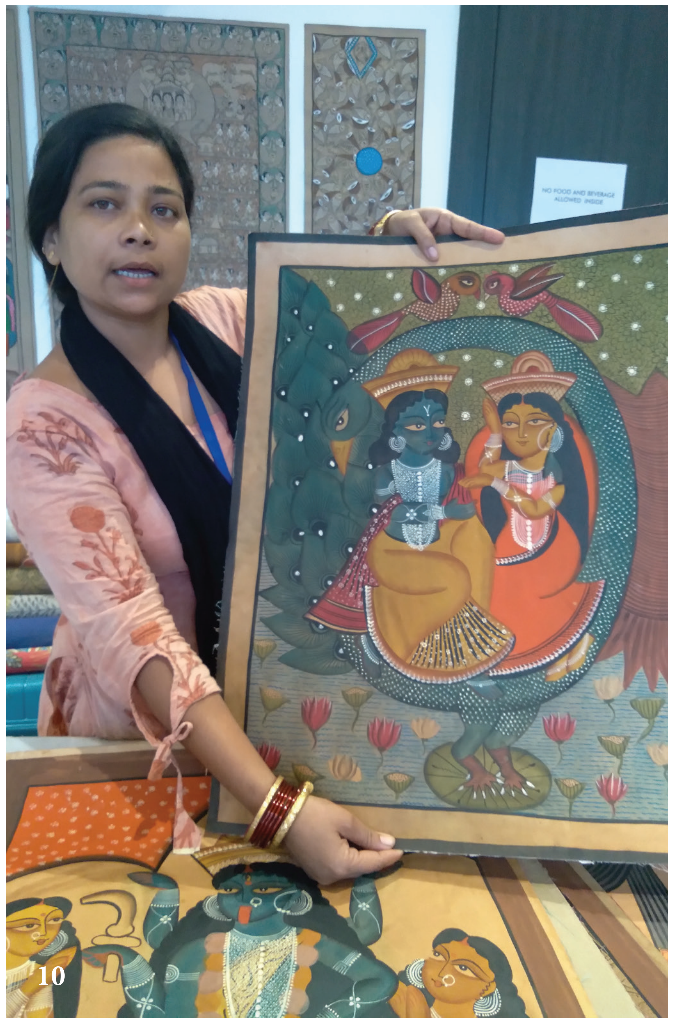
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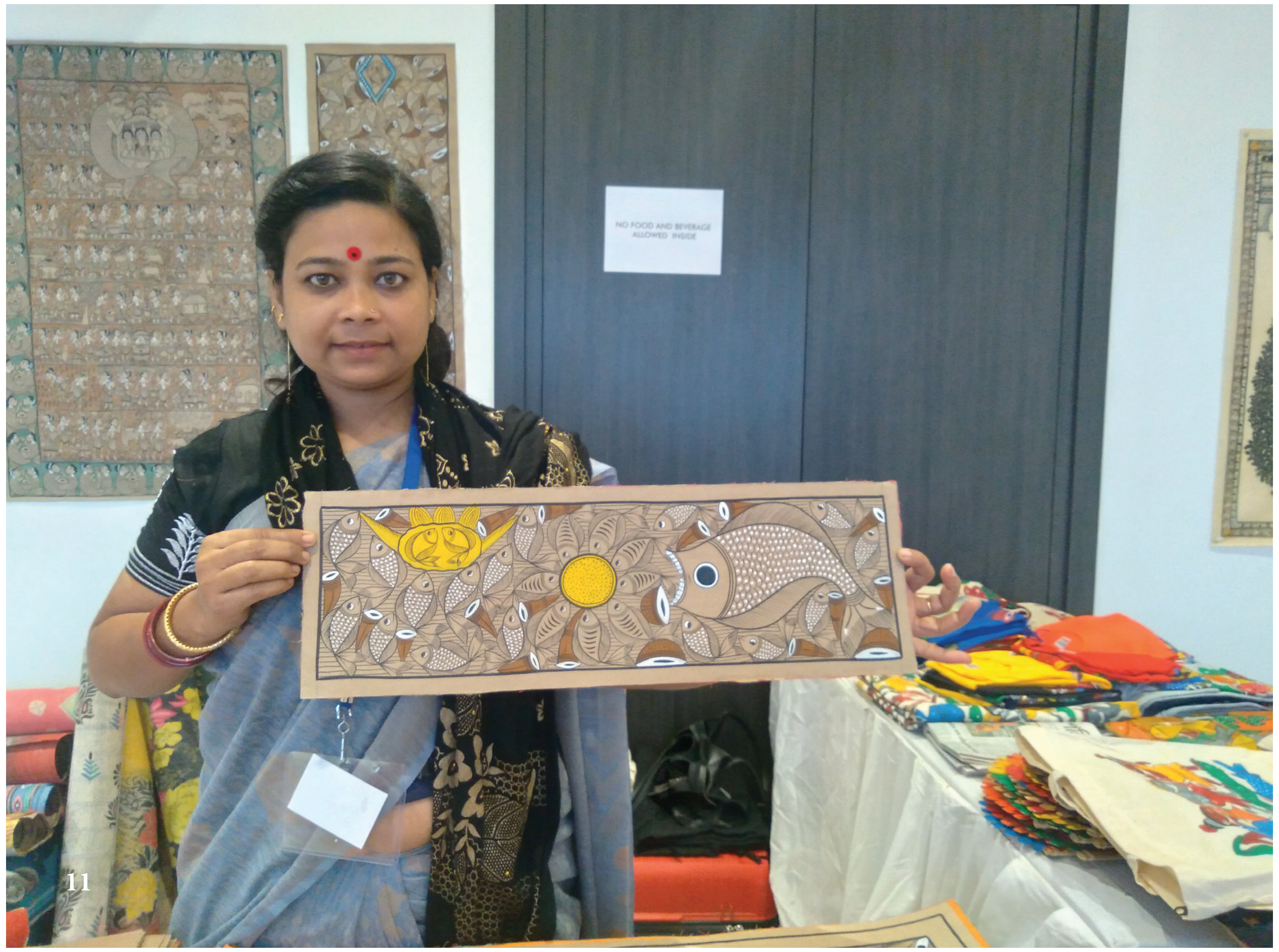
NO FOOD AND BEVERAGE ALLOWED INSIDE
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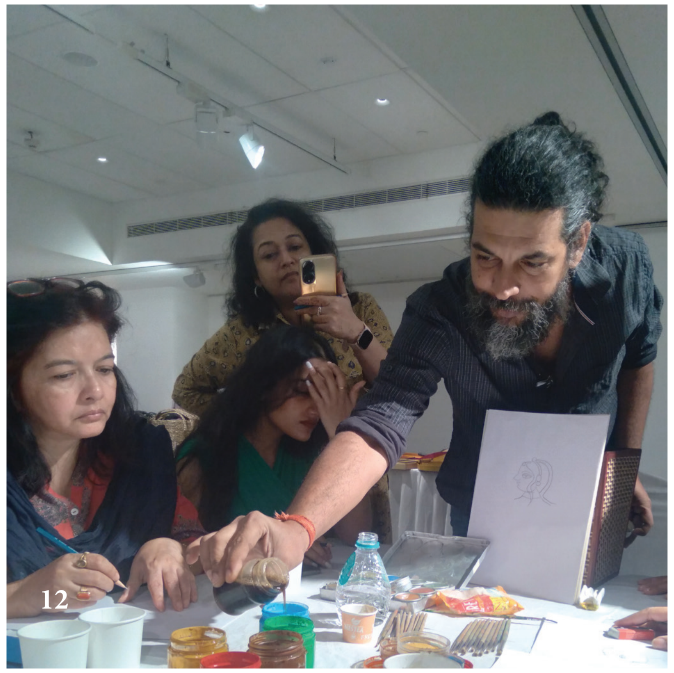
Figure 09-11: Another Patachitra artist, Swarna Chitrakar displays her paintings of the folktale of the Wedding of the Fishes, and a Kalighat painting at an exhibition at Kolkata Center for Creativity (KCC).

Figure 12-15: Rajasthani Padha painting workshop conducted by artist Nandu Sharma and Madhubani painting workshop by artist Santosh Paswan from Bihar using local techniques and materials at the KCC.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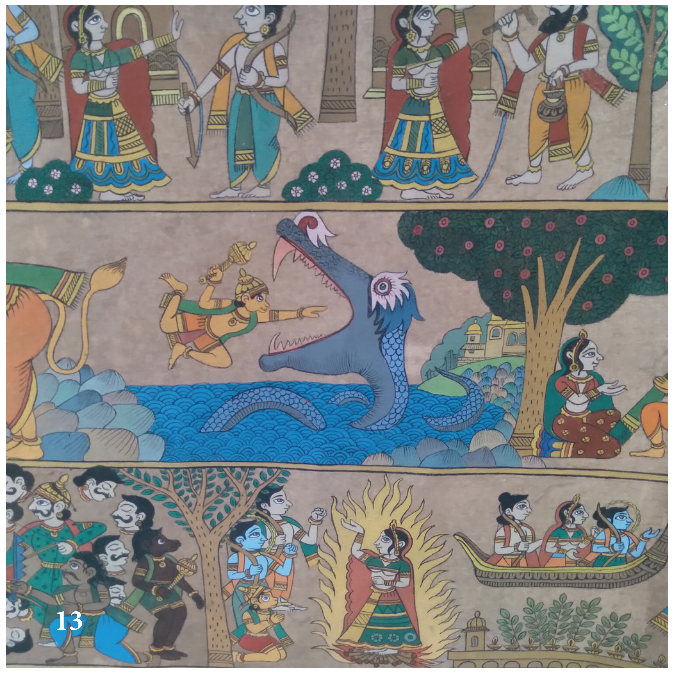
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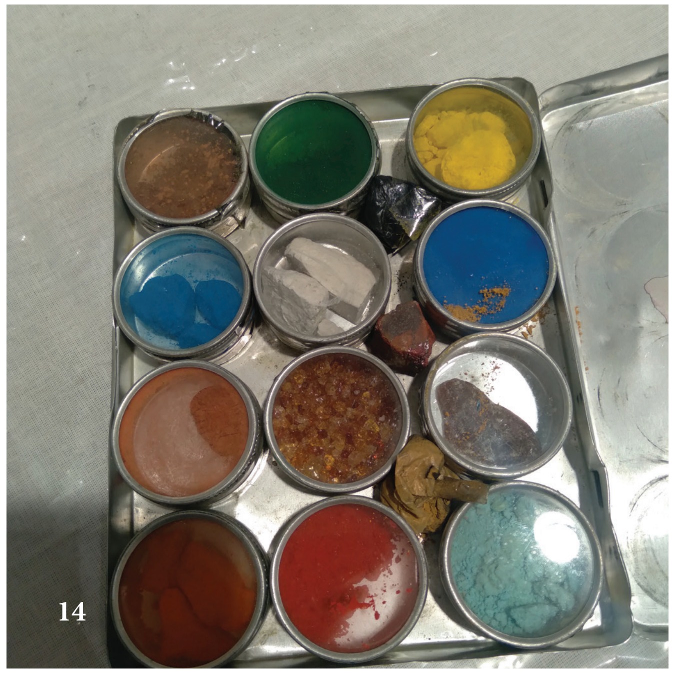
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Figure 16-17: Sample of Padh painting and Madhubani Painting after workshop by the author.

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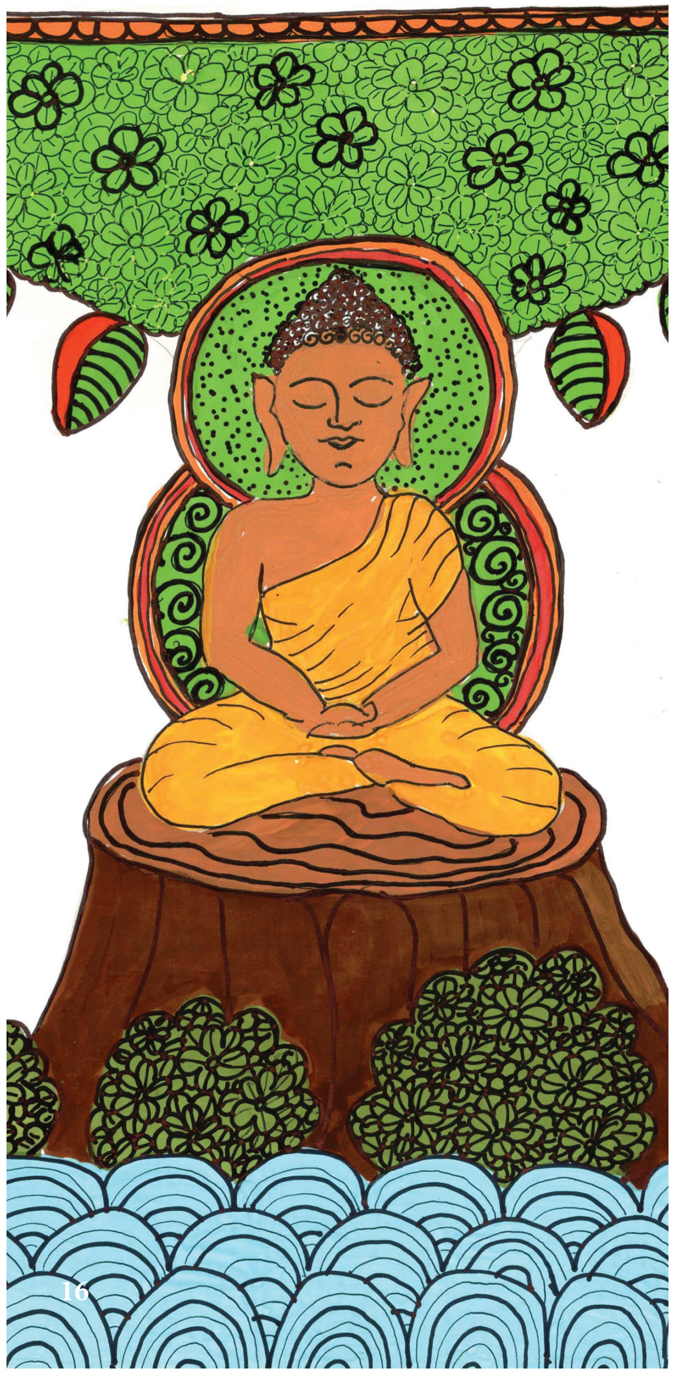
Figure 18-22: Ravan Chayya was a puppet show organised by the Birla Academy for Art and performed by the Ravan Chaya Natya Sansad, from Orissa. Two stories from the Ramayan are depicted here,the first where the boatman refuses to take Rama and Lakshman across the river, and the second where the Guru of Ram and Lakshman, Vashistha, request their father for their support.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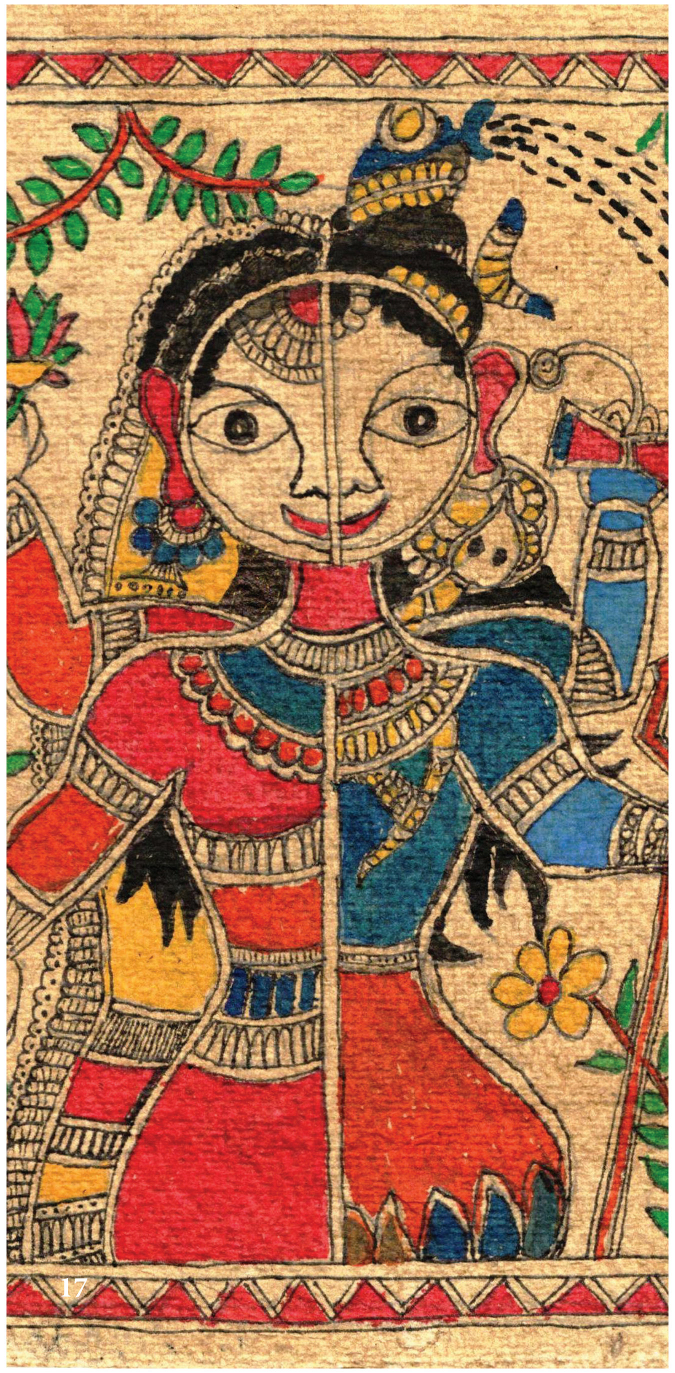
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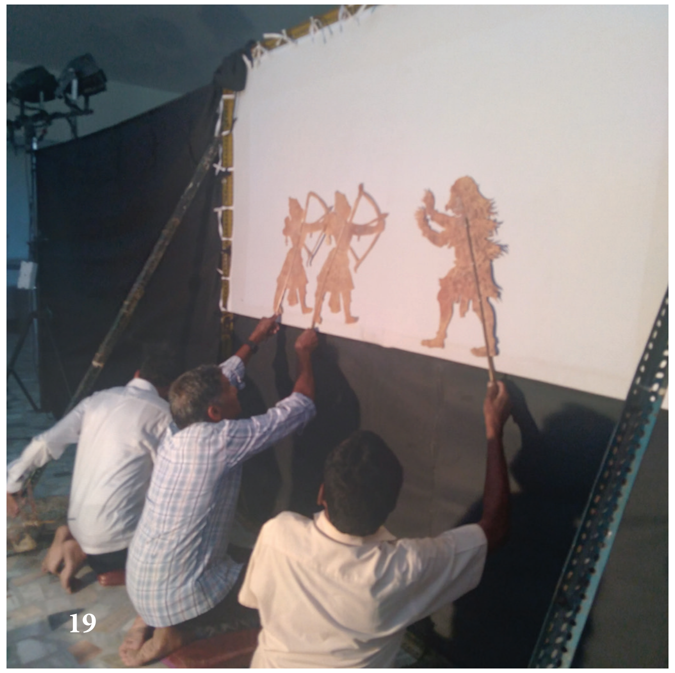
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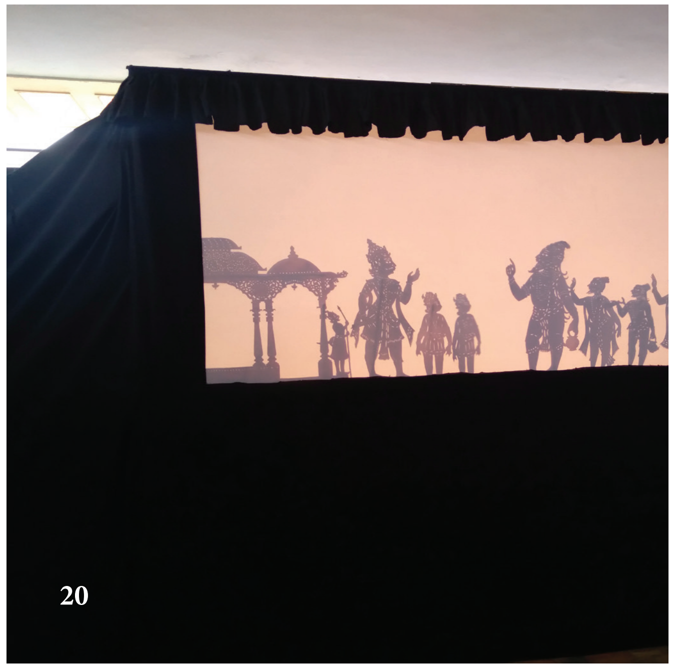
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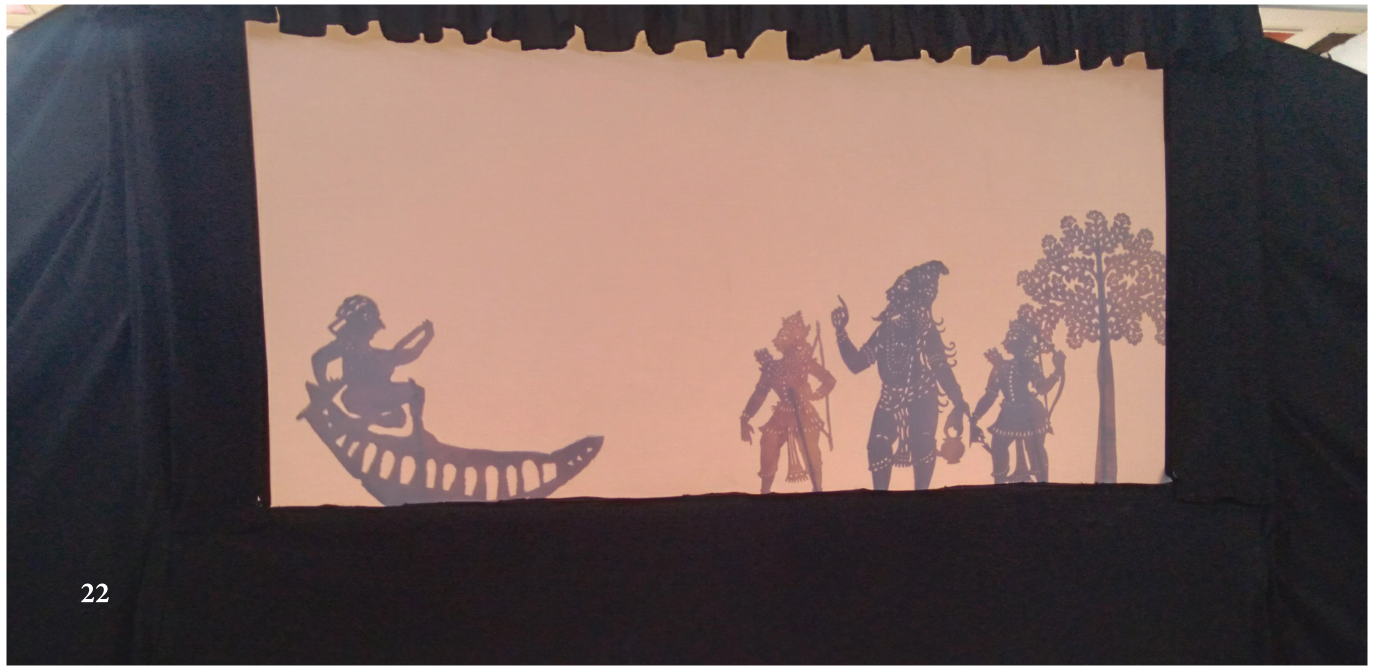
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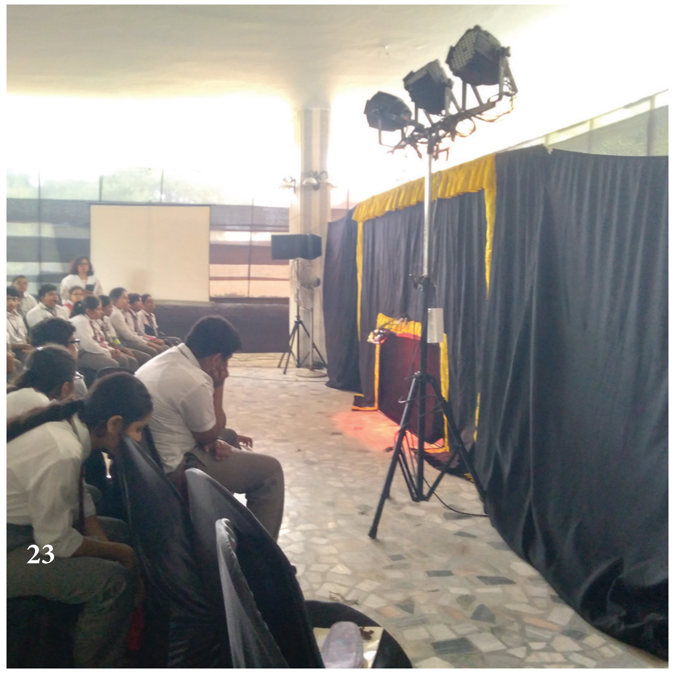
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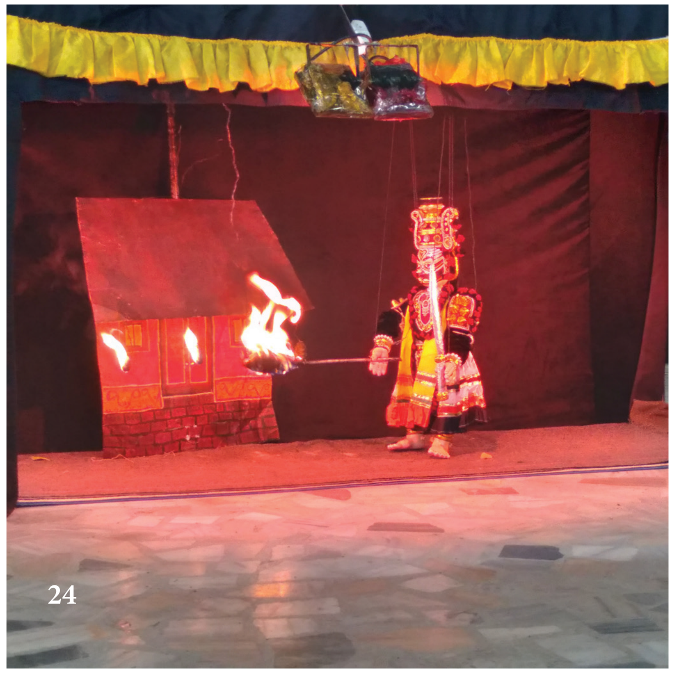
Figure 23-26: Yakshagana Puppet Show, a puppet show performance at the Birla Academy for Art, from Kerala tells the story of Narakasurs Vadhe.

Figure 27-30: Gotipua dance performance about the Chir Haran of Draupadi on the lawns of the Birla Art Academy by the boys of the Dasabhuja Gotipua Odisha Nrutya Parisha, Orissa.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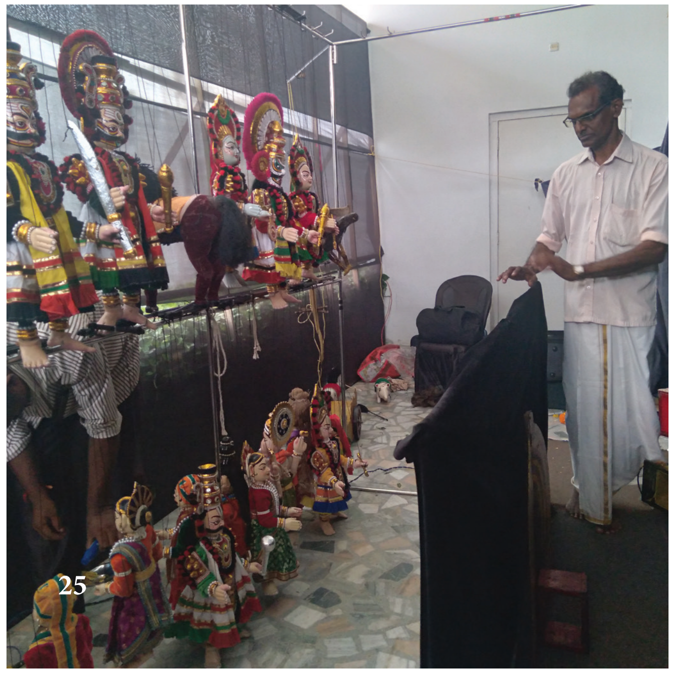
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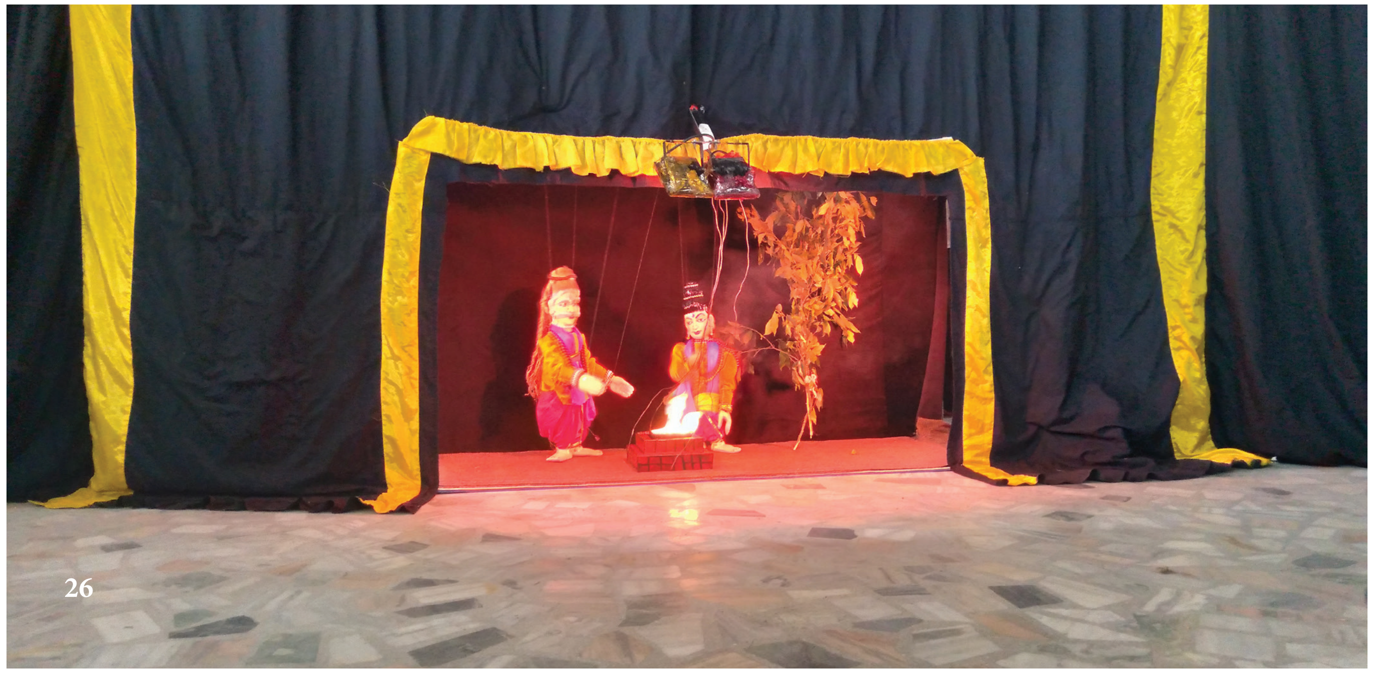
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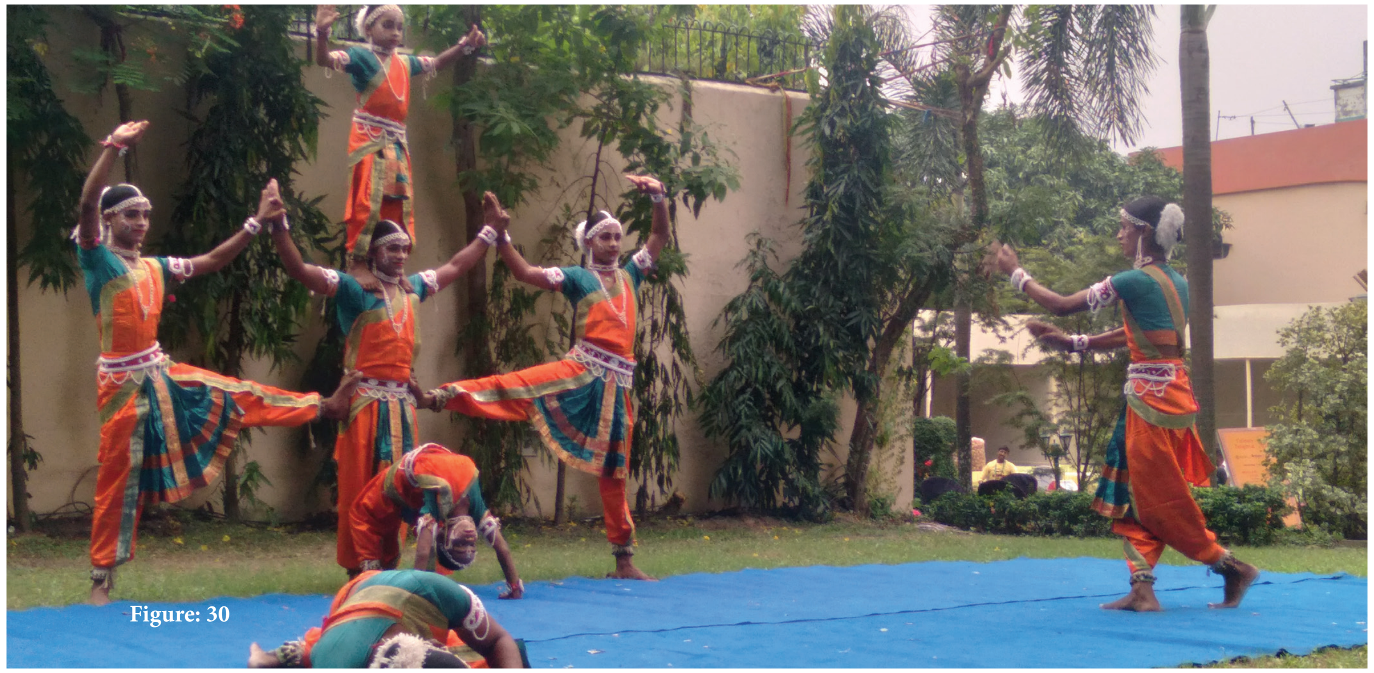
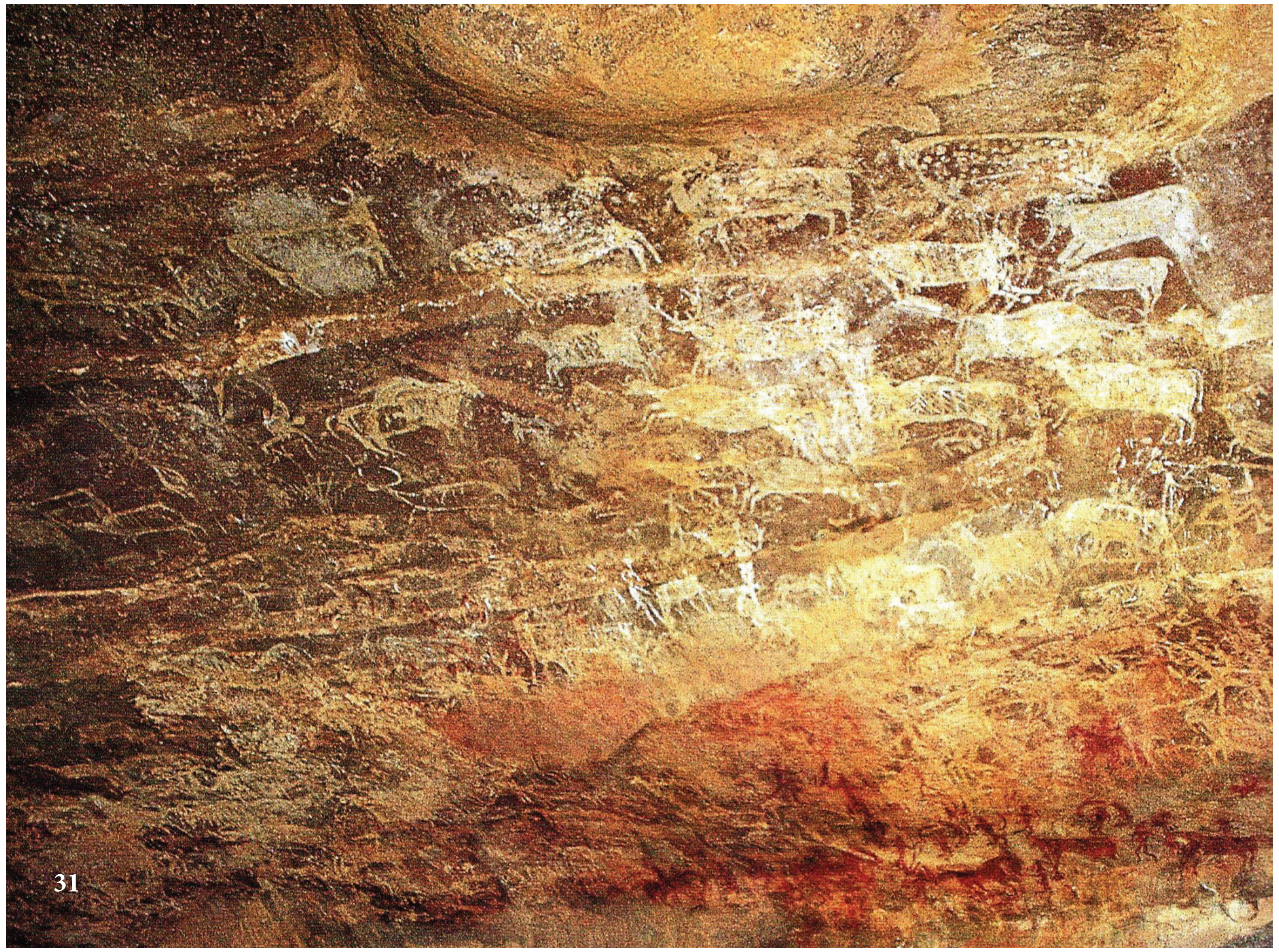


Figure: 30



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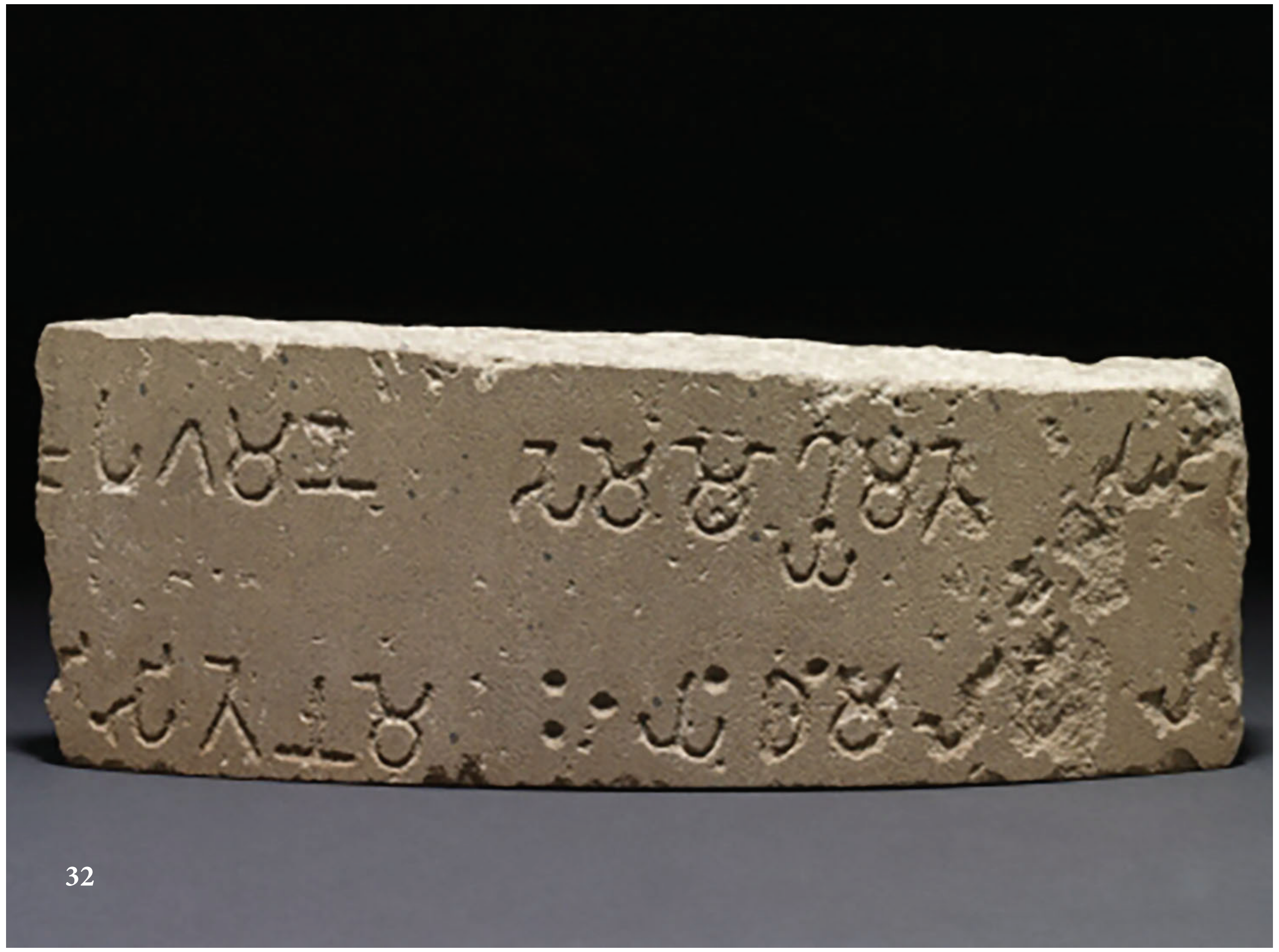

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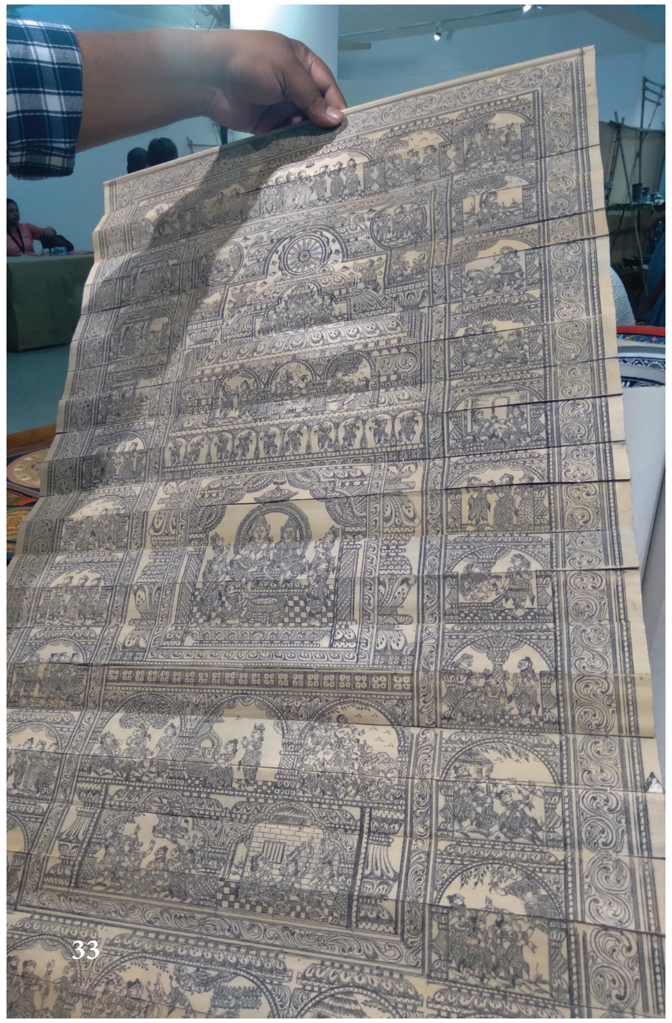
Facing Page:
Figure 31: Pre Historic Art at Bhimbetka. (Source: Heritage Souvenir. INTACH India).

Figure 32: Clay tablets. (Source: Internet).

Figure 33-35:
Palm leaf etching demonstration by Akash Swain at the KCC.



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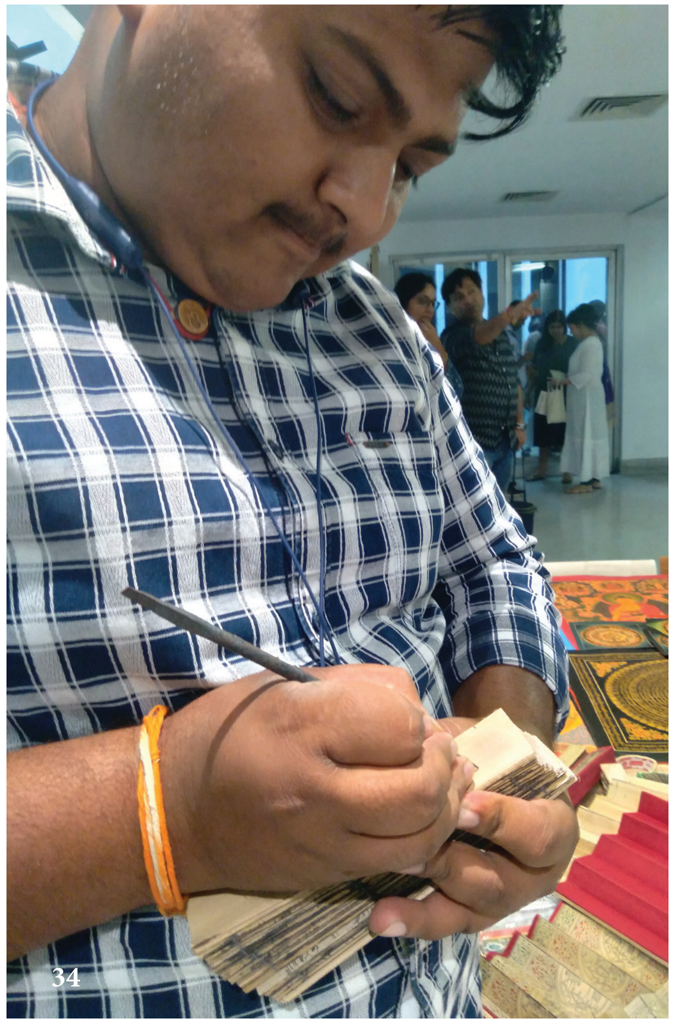

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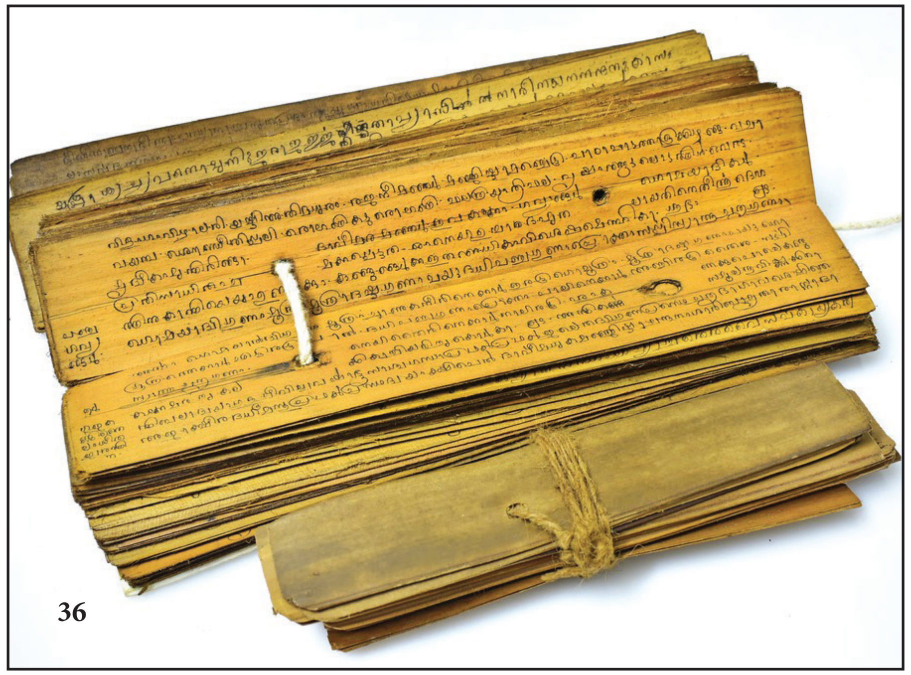
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Figure 36-37: Palm Leaf Manuscripts
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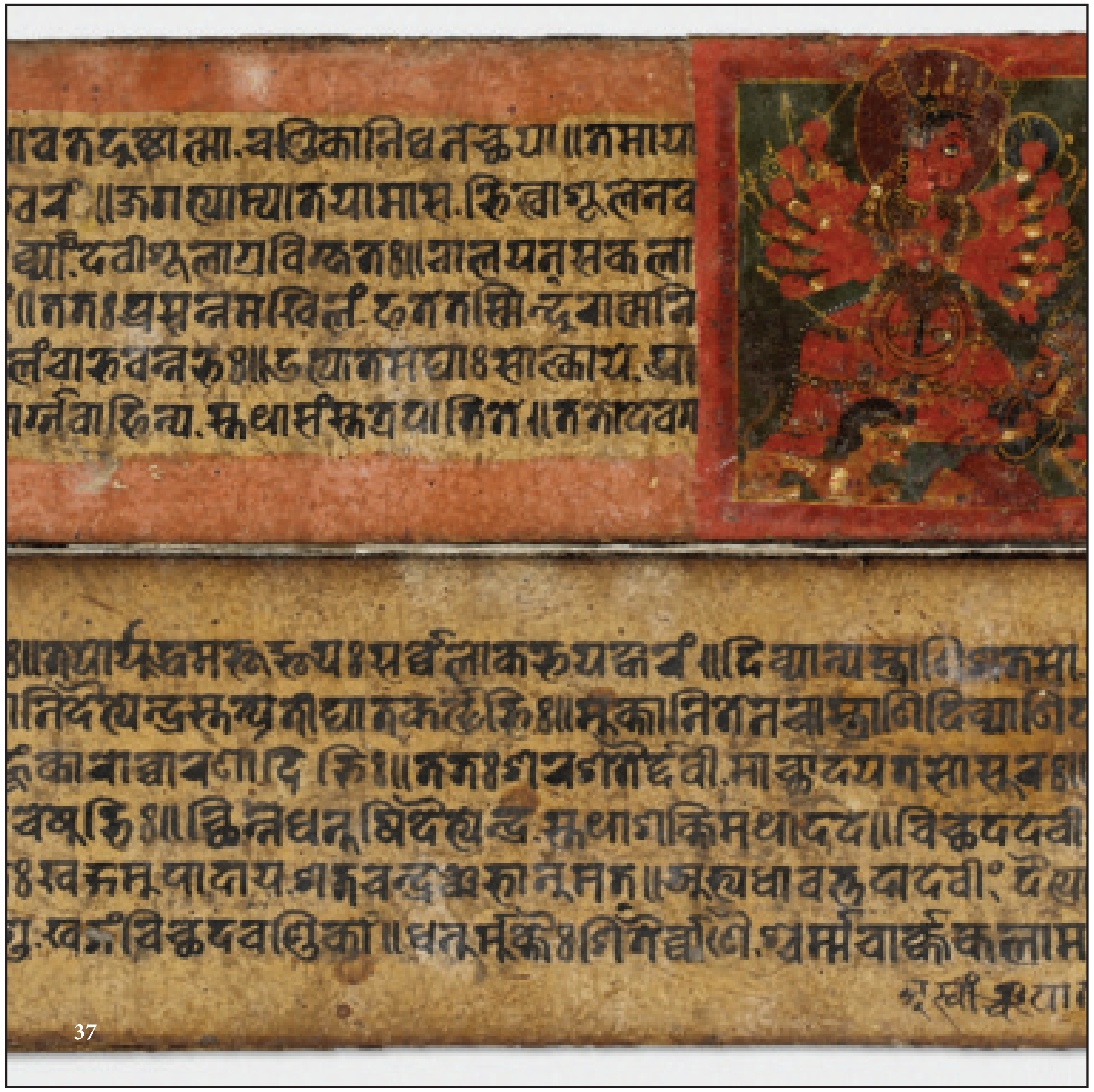
Figure 38-39: Printing press of Upendrakishore, illustrations by Satyajit Ray. (Source: 3 Rays: Stories from Satyajit Ray).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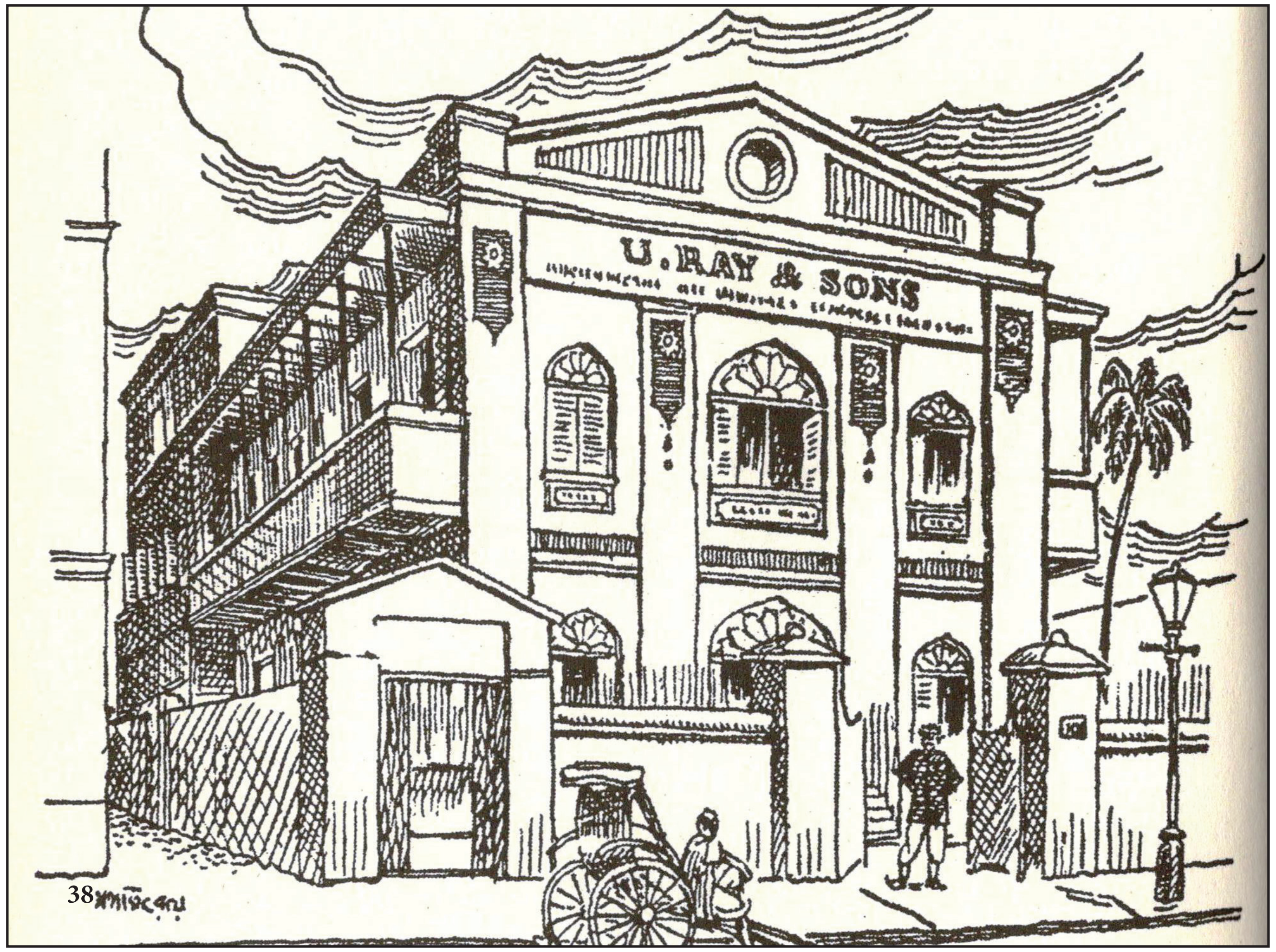

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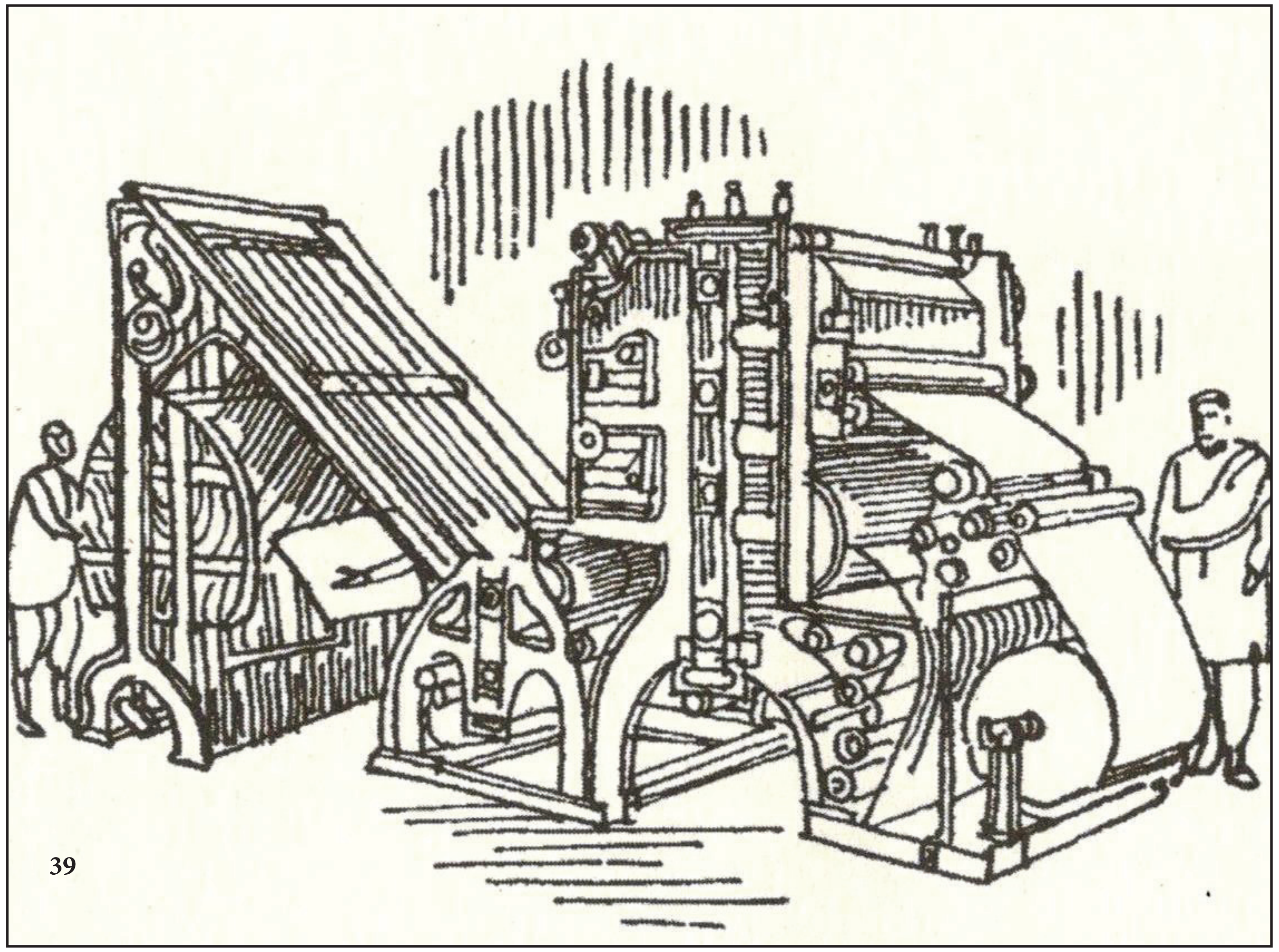
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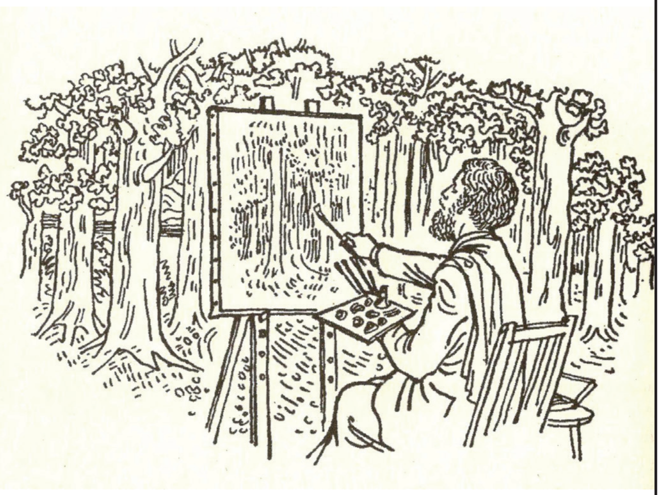

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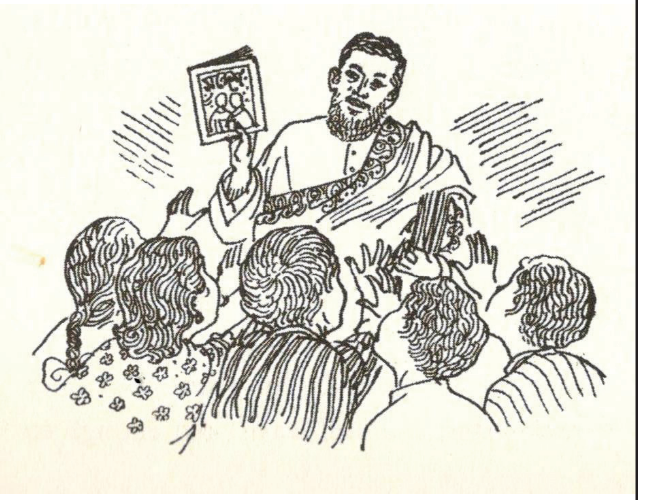

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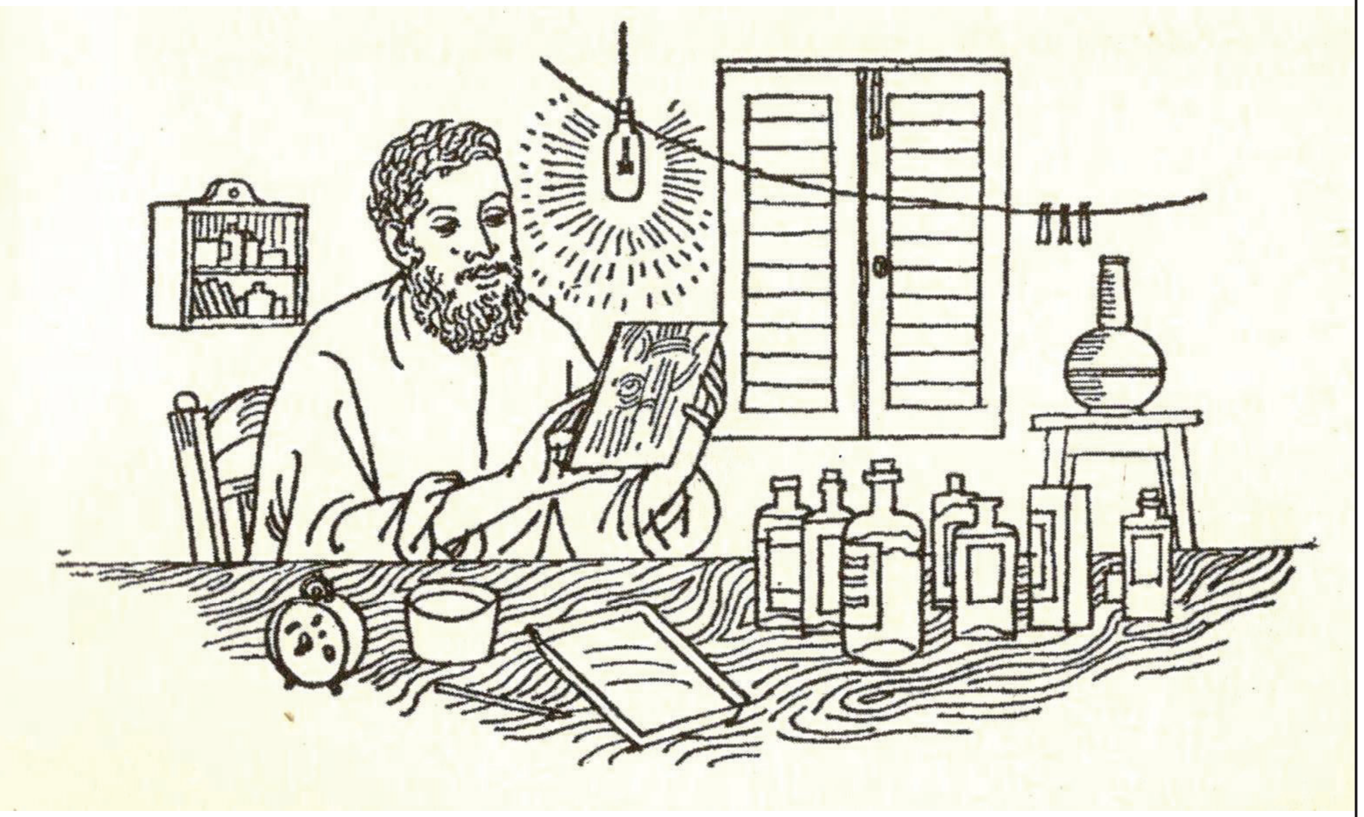

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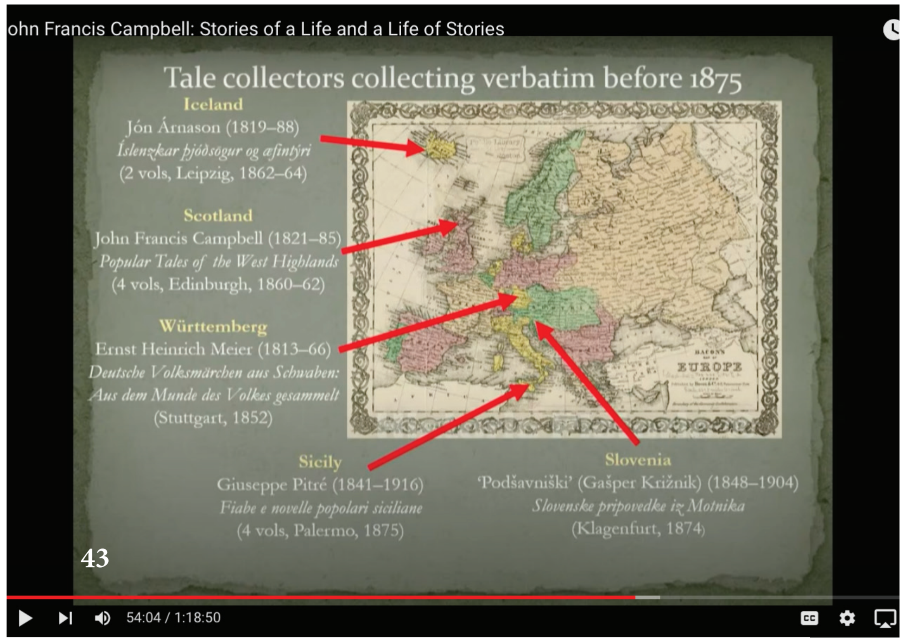
Facing Page:
Figure40-42: Early printed books and illustrations for printing as they shifted from earlier paintings to etchings. (Source: 3 Rays: Stories from Satyajit Ray).

Figure43: Map and collections of Folklore, (Source: John Francis Campbell: Stories of a Life and a Life of Stories, a talk by Dr Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart).
Figure 44:Robert the Bruce and the spider, a folklore from Scotland which has travelled to India. (Source:
The Lore of Scotland).
Figure 45:Grimms Fairy Tales. (Source: Internet).
Figure 46 :Walt Disney Pictures have produced films on stories from all over the world. (Source: Internet).
Figure 47; Dalim Kumar, a 19th century fairy tale from Bengal. (Tales from Thakurmar Jhuli).



ohn Francis Campbell: Stories of a Life and a Life of Stories

Tale collectors collecting verbatim before 1875

Iceland
Jón Árnason (1819–88)
Íslenzkar þjóðsögur og æfintýri
(2 vols, Leipzig, 1862–64)

Scotland
John Francis Campbell (1821–85)
Popular Tales of the West Highlands
(4 vols, Edinburgh, 1860–62)

Württemberg
Ernst Heinrich Meier (1813–66)
Deutsche Volksmärchen aus Schwaben: Aus dem Munde des Volkes gesammelt
(Stuttgart, 1852)

Sicily
Giuseppe Pitré (1841–1916)
Fiabe e novelle popolari siciliane
(4 vols, Palermo, 1875)

Slovenia
'Podšavniški' (Gašper Križnik) (1848–1904)
Slovenske pripovedke iz Motnika
(Klagenfurt, 1874)

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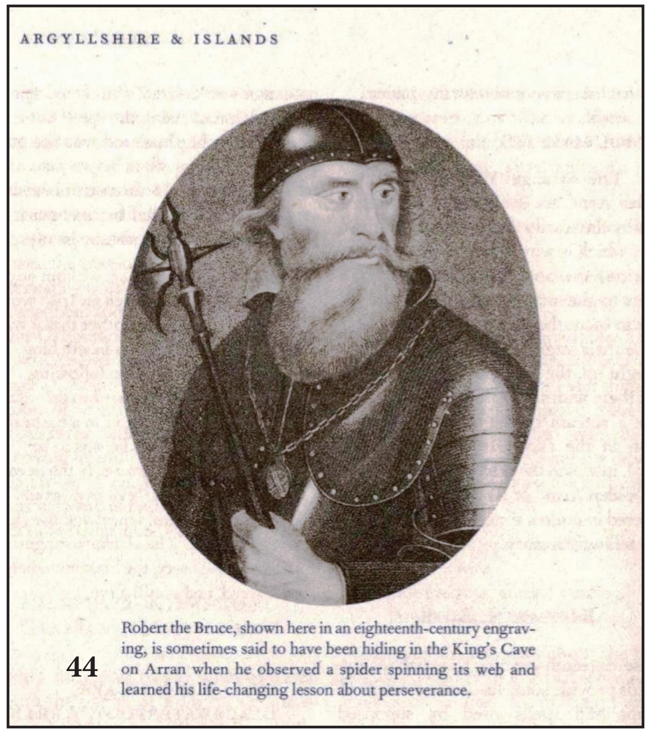
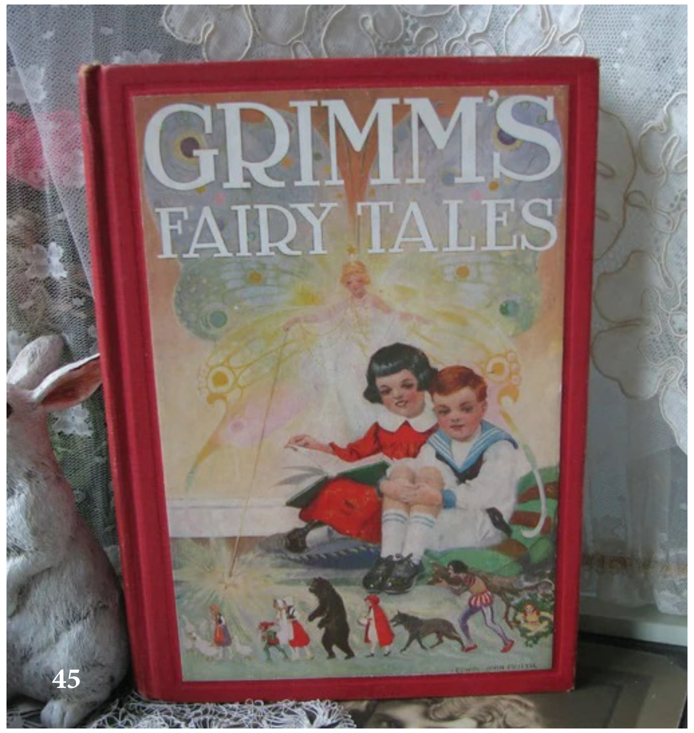
BACON'S
EUROPE
54:04 / 1:18:50



ARGYLLSHIRE & ISLANDS

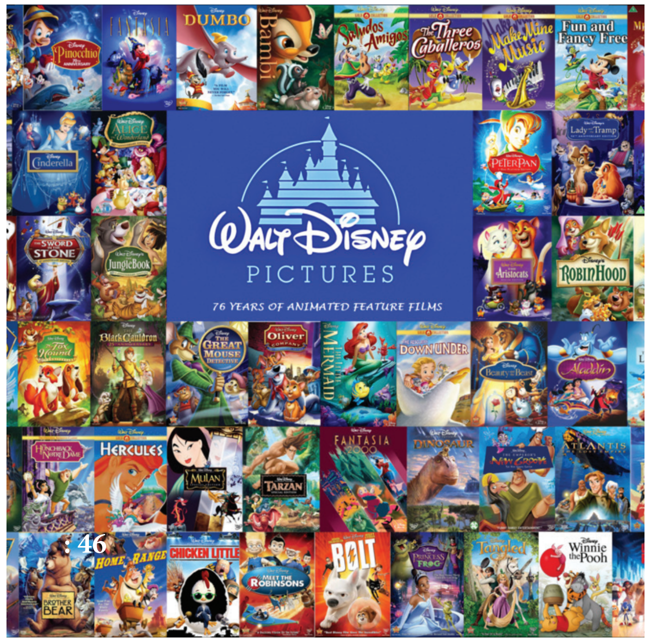
44

Robert the Bruce, shown here in an eighteenth-century engraving, is sometimes said to have been hiding in the King's Cave on Arran when he observed a spider spinning its web and learned his life-changing lesson about perseverance.



GRIMM'S
FAIRY TALES

45



WALT DISNEY
PICTURES
76 YEARS OF ANIMATED FEATURE FILMS
Pinocchio
FANTASIA
DUMBO
Bambi
Saludos Amigos
The Three Caballeros
Make Mine Music
Fun and Fancy Free
Cinderella
Peter Pan
Sword in the Stone
Jungle Book
Robin Hood
Oliver
Hercules
Mulan
Tarzan
Atlantis
Home on the Range
Chicken Little
Meet the Robinsons
BOLT
Winnie the Pooh

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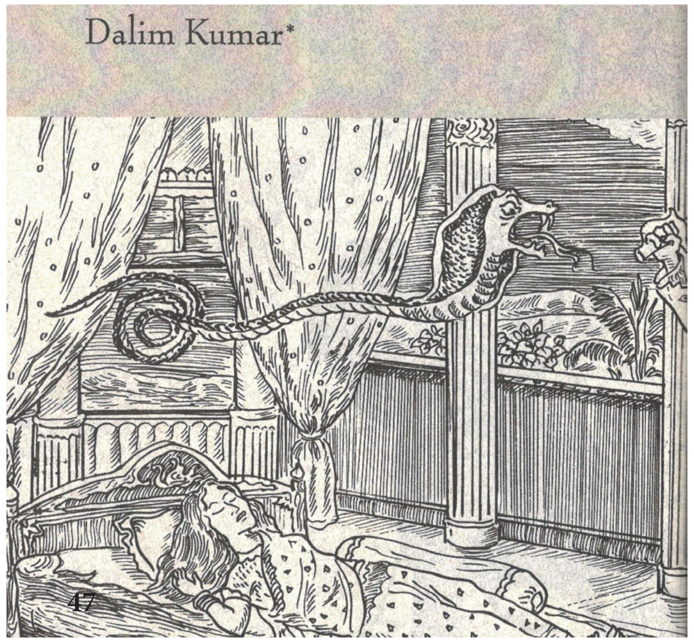
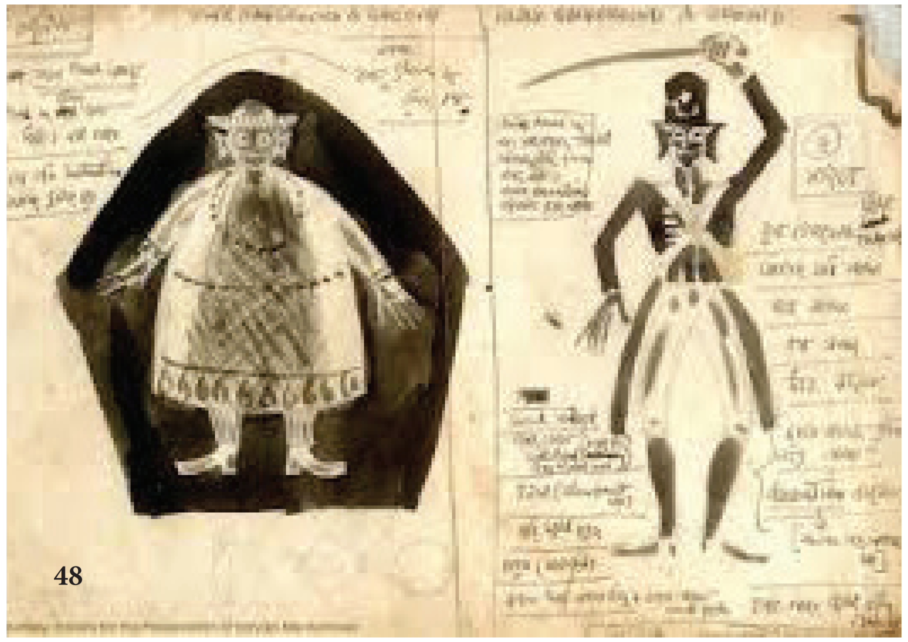


Dalim Kumar*

47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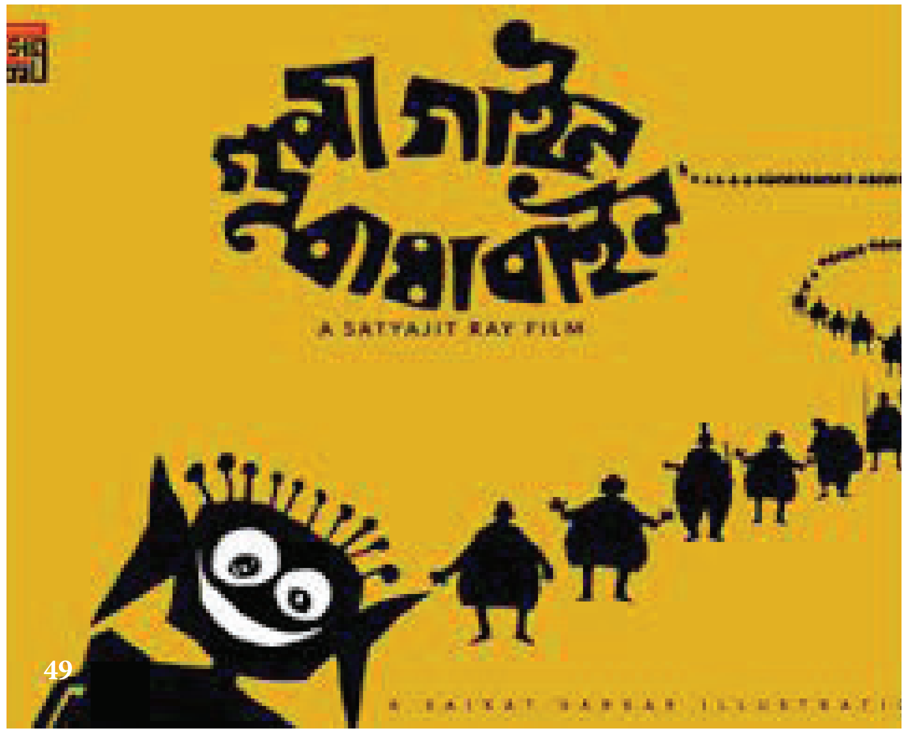
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গুপী গাইন বাঘা বাইন
A SATYAJIT RAY FILM
A SAIKAT SARKAR ILLUSTRATI

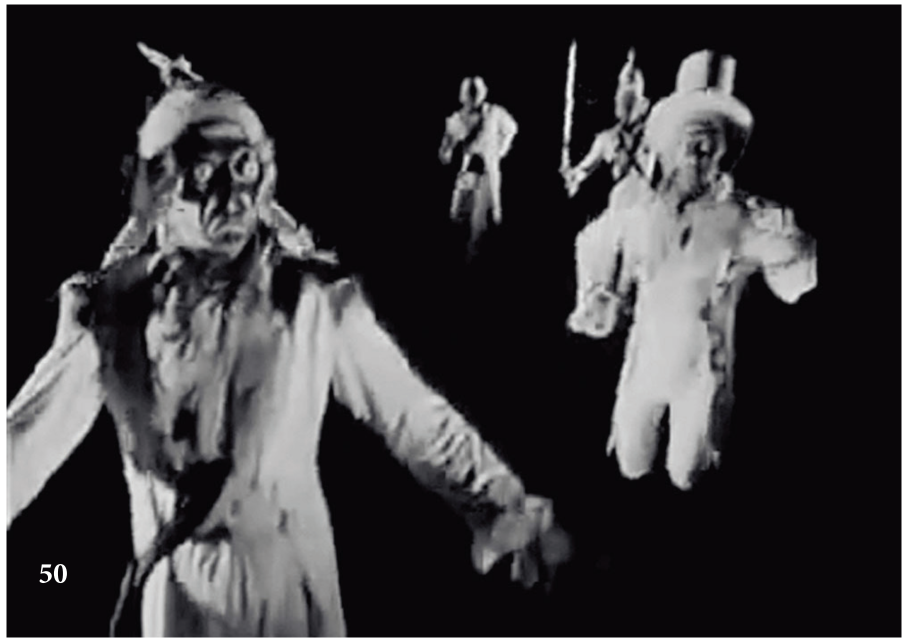
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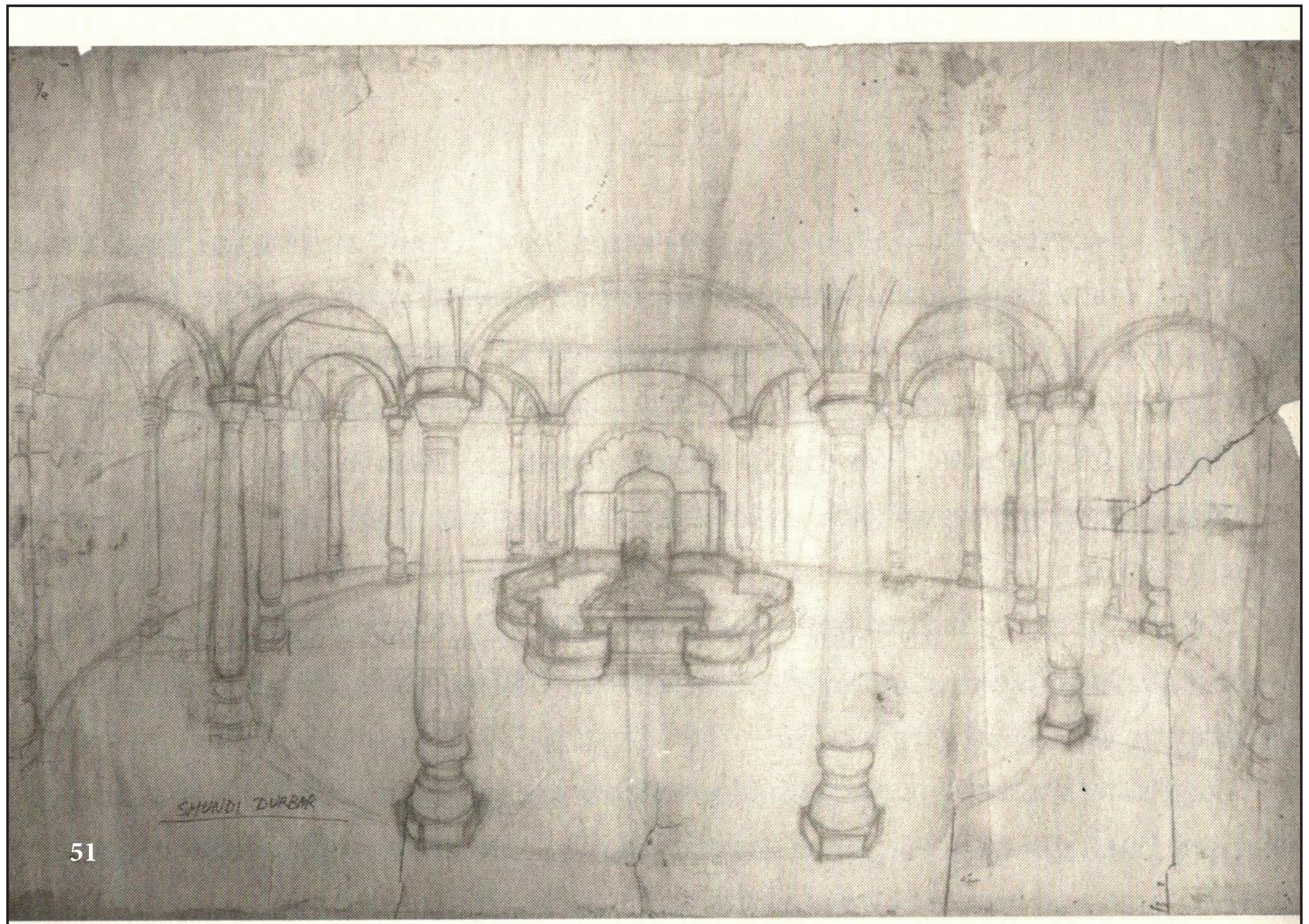
Figure 48 : Drawings made by Satyajit Ray for a film set. (Source: 3 Rawys: Stories from Satyajit Ray).

Figure 49 - 52: Gupi Gayen Bagha Bayne, a story from Bengal was made into a film for children. (Source: 3 Rays: Stories from Satyajit Ray).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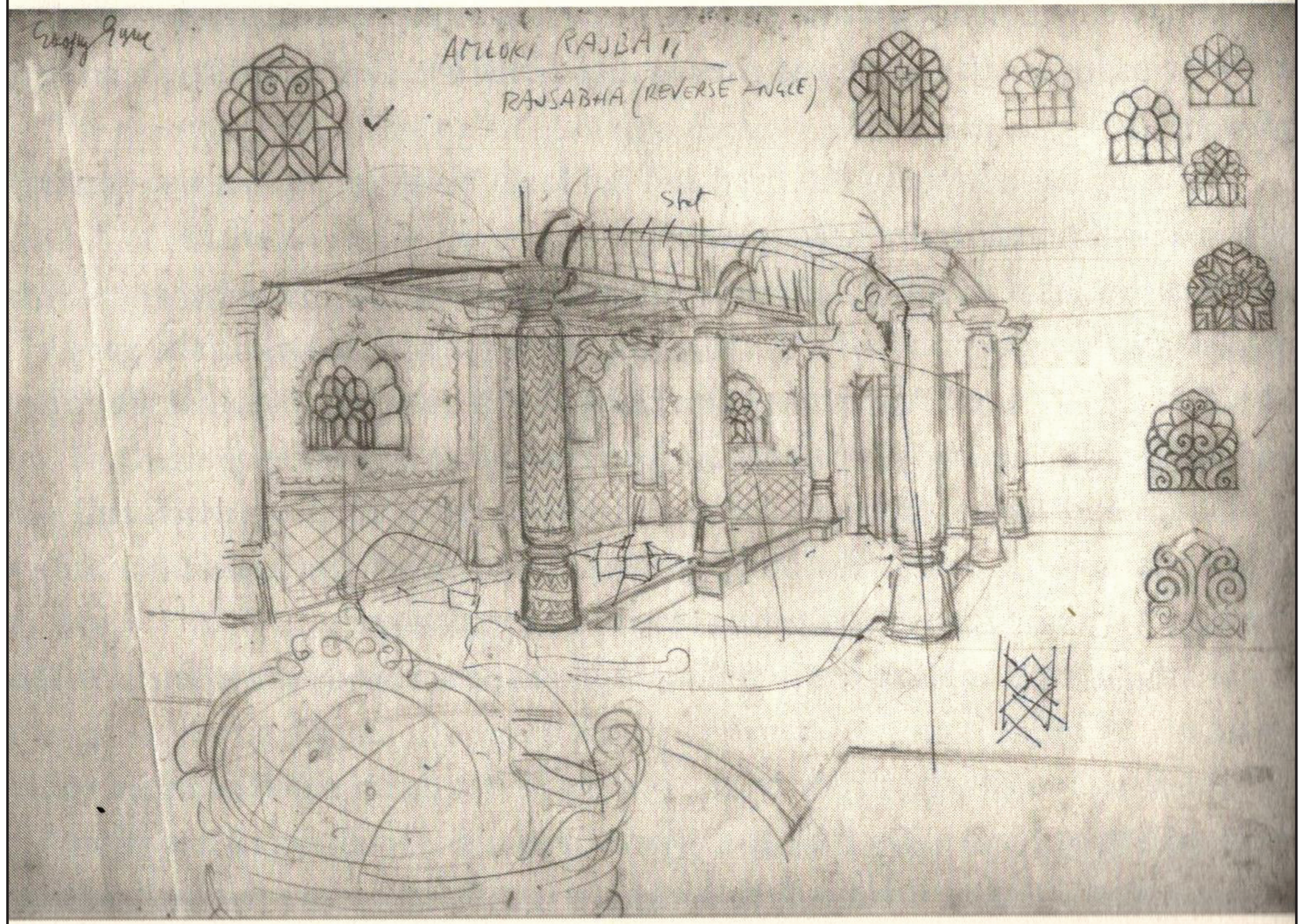
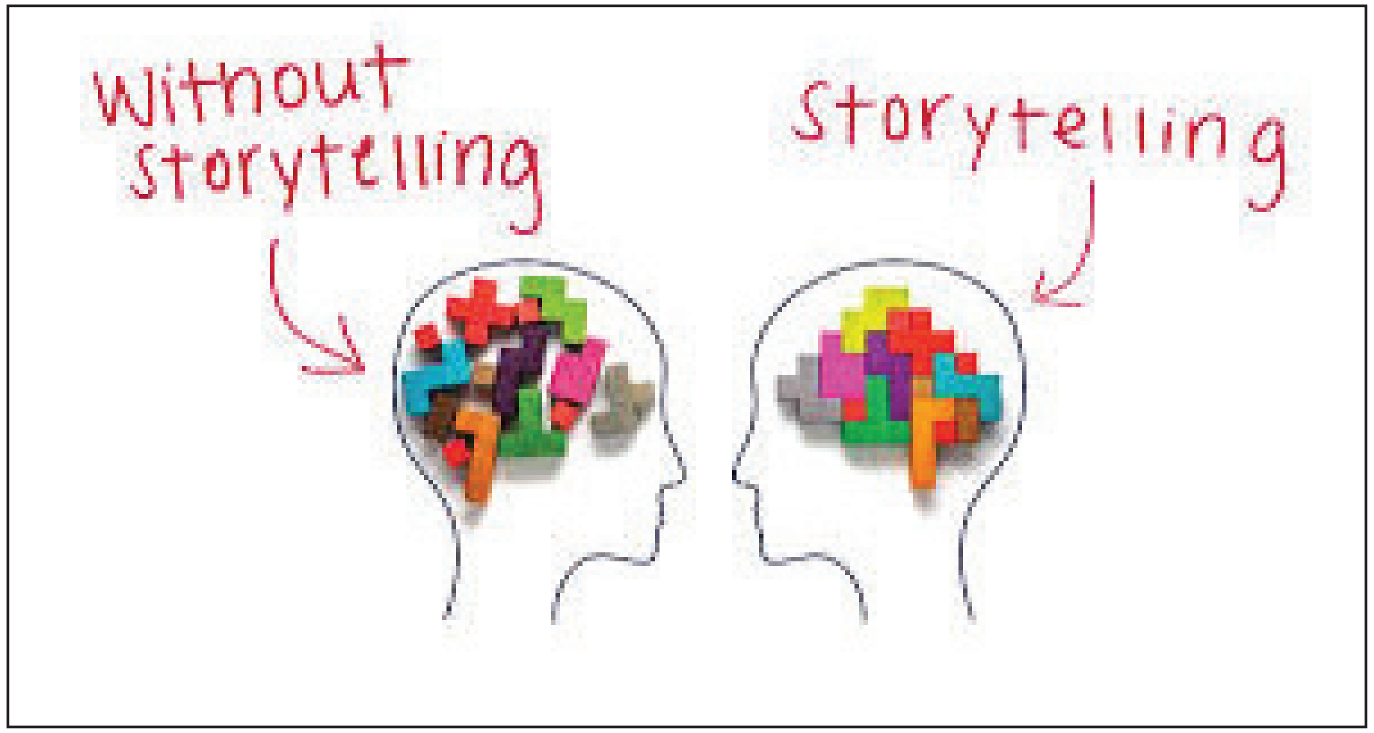
SHUNDI DURBAR

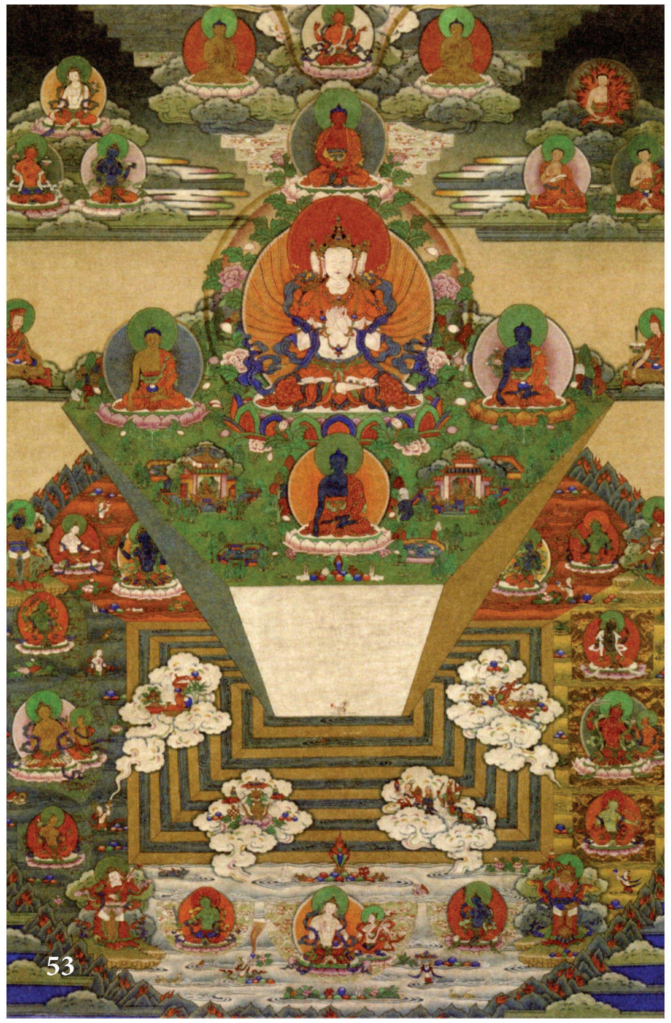


AMLOKI RAJBATI
RAJSABHA (REVERSE ANGLE)
Shot

52 Meticulous drafts of the Durbar Hall in the kingdom of Shundi and Amloki made by Ray for the film

Architecture, History, Storytelling


Without storytelling
Storytelling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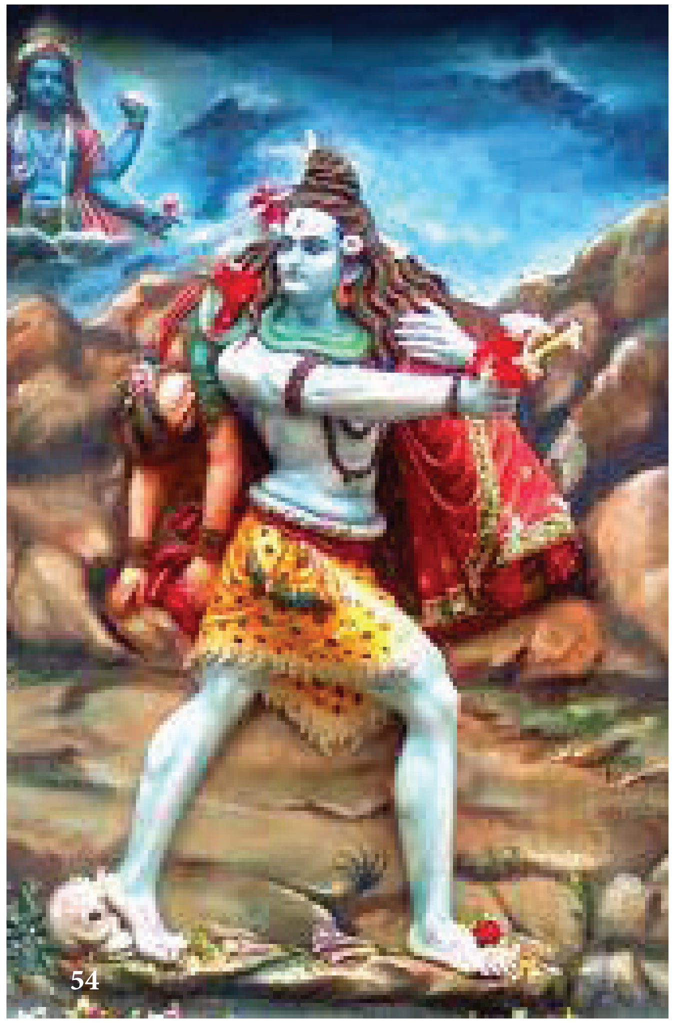
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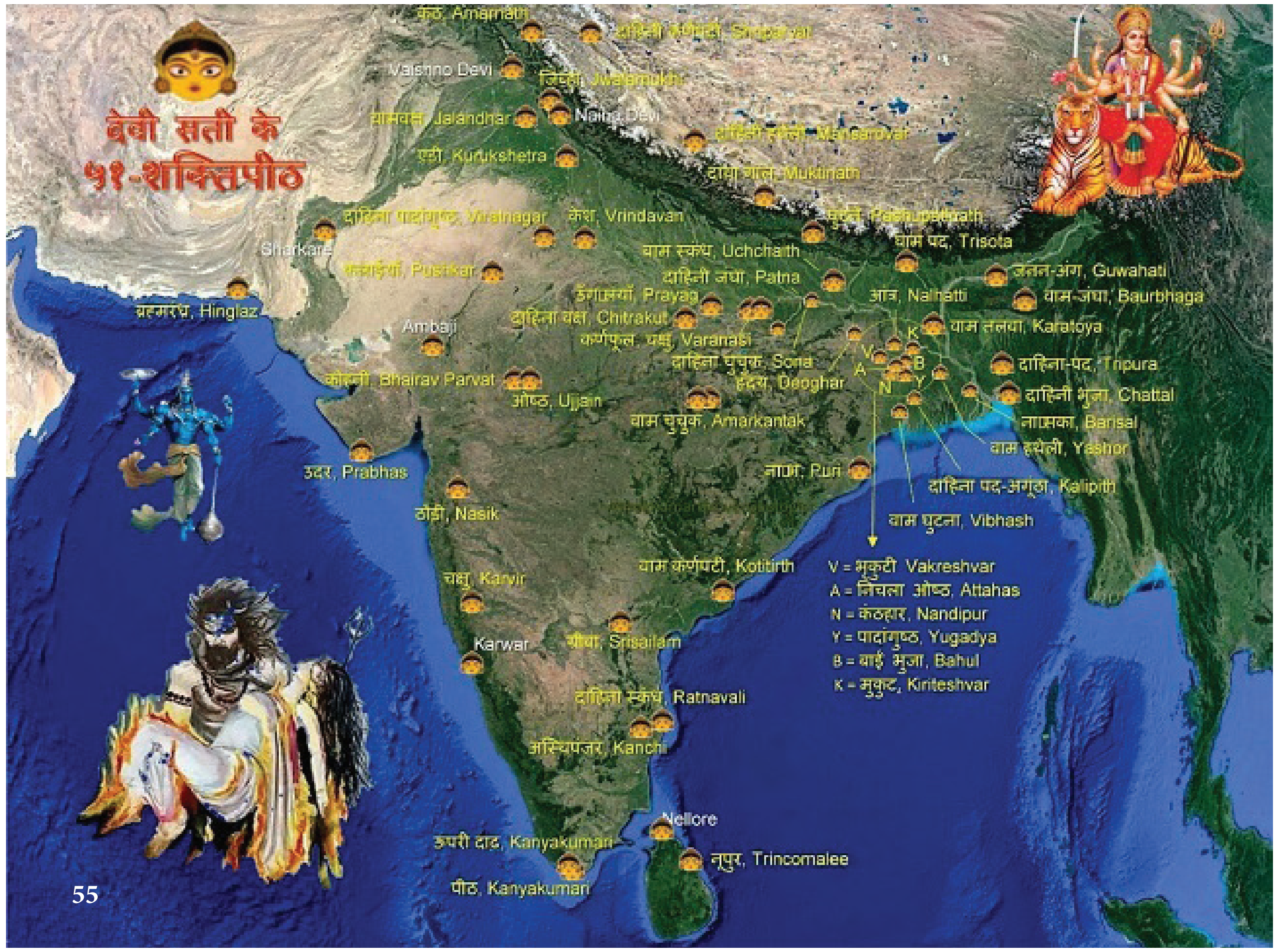

देवी सती के
५१-शक्तिपीठ
कंठ, Amarnath
दाहिनी कर्णपटी, Shriparvat
Vaishno Devi
जिह्वा, Jwalamukhi
वामवक्ष, Jalandhar
Naina Devi
एड़ी, Kurukshetra
दाहिनी हथेली, Mansarovar
दायां गाल, Muktinath
दाहिना पादांगुष्ठ, Viratnagar
केश, Vrindavan
घुटने, Pashupatinath
Sharkare
वाम स्कंध, Uchchaith
वाम पद, Trisota
मणिबंध, Pushkar
दाहिनी जंघा, Patna
जनन-अंग, Guwahati
ब्रह्मरंध्र, Hinglaz
ऊंगलियाँ, Prayag
आंत्र, Nalhatti
वाम-जंघा, Baurbhaga
Ambaji
दाहिना वक्ष, Chitrakut
वाम तलवा, Karatoya
कर्णफूल, चक्षु, Varanasi
दाहिना चुचुक, Sona
दाहिना-पद, Tripura
कोहनी, Bhairav Parvat
हृदय, Deoghar
दाहिनी भुजा, Chattal
ओष्ठ, Ujjain
वाम चुचुक, Amarkantak
नासिका, Barisal
वाम हथेली, Yashor
उदर, Prabhas
नाभि, Puri
दाहिना पद-अंगुली, Kalipith
ठोड़ी, Nasik
वाम घुटना, Vibhash
वाम कर्णपटी, Kotitirth
चक्षु, Karvir
V = भृकुटी Vakreshvar
A = निचला ओष्ठ, Attahas
N = कंठहार, Nandipur
Y = पादांगुष्ठ, Yugadya
B = बाईं भुजा, Bahul
K = मुकुट, Kiriteshvar
Karwar
ग्रीवा, Srisailam
दाहिना स्कंध, Ratnavali
अस्थिपंजर, Kanchi
Nellore
ऊपरी दाढ़, Kanyakumari
नूपुर, Trincomalee
पीठ, Kanyakumari
55

Figure 53: The history of architecture in India, as per our mythology, can be started from the Mount Kailash for Hindus, the abode of the God Shiva, also referred to as Mount Meru by Buddhists, and thus all temples use the imagery of mountains in their outer form.

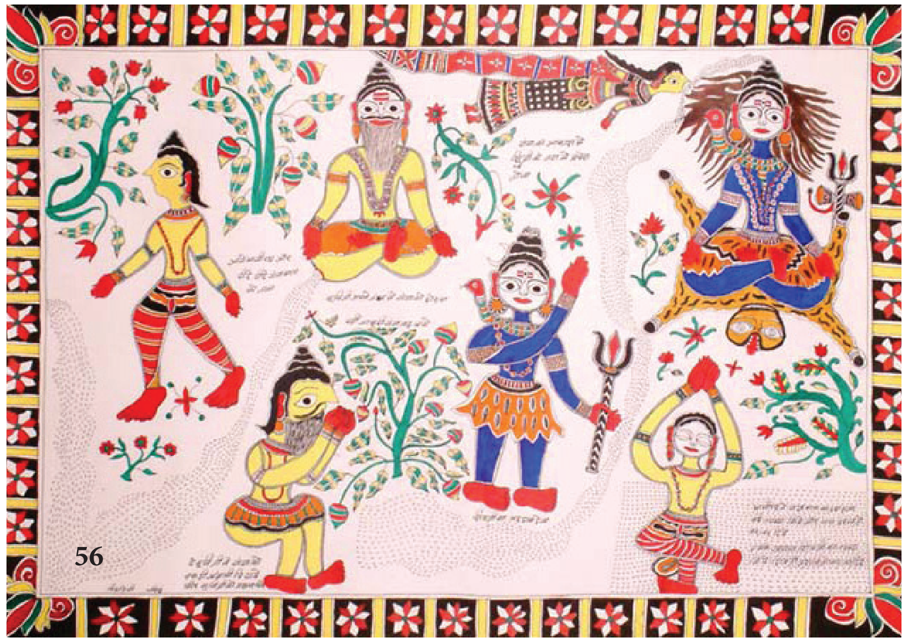
Figure 54: Sati, a princess fell in love with God Shiva, and married him. The story goes that after her death Shiva went mad with grief and roamed the earth carrying her dead body. To relieve him of this pain, God Vishnu used his sudarshan chakra and cut the body in 51 pieces, which fell in different parts of the earth, called devi peeth. Where ever these parts fell roughly forms the geographical borders of India. Another story of Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma, marks the north and south boundaries of India.

Figure 55: There is an interesting story of how rivers came down to earth from the heavens. In the Puranas it is told that the sons of King Sagara had been burnt to ashes by Sage Kapila. To bring deliverance to their souls, Bhagiratha, the grandson of Sagara did great penance to bring Ganga, which flowed in the heavens, to earth. Brahma, happy with the penance of the king agreed and since the descent would have shattered the earth, Shiva had to break the fall in the coils of his hair. When Ganga descended, Bhagiratha led her to the sea and to the patal loka and liberated the sixty thousand sons of Sagara. Ganga continues to sustain and liberate the Hindus after their death. Historical towns and cities came up along the Ganga and other rivers

Figure 56: The hindu temples from the Gupta period onwards, constructed with the imagery of the mountain from outside and a womb like cave on the inside also carried the stories of human experience on their wall surfaces as sculptures and paintings. Often the mythological stories from the epics also adorn the temples carrying forward the stories of the Hindus.

Figure 57: According to Ramayana, Ravana kidnapped Sita, wife of Rama and brought her to Sri Lanka and kept her at Ashok Vatika where Lord Hanuman visits her and takes her ring to be given to Rama.

Figure 58: The Pandavas established Indraprastha as the capital city of their Kingdom after Dritarashtra gave them the Khandavprastha region, of the ancestral kingdom, as their share. Duryodhana and Sakuni visited to inspect the Pandavas' magnificent palace and walked around the palace andmarvelled at the extraordinary designs they had never seen before in Hastinapur. Duryodhana mistook the crystal floor to be an indoor pond and he mistook an indoor pond for a crystal floor. As a result, he fell into the water and got himself wet. When the Pandava and their wife Draupadi saw this, they laughed at his plight. Duryodhana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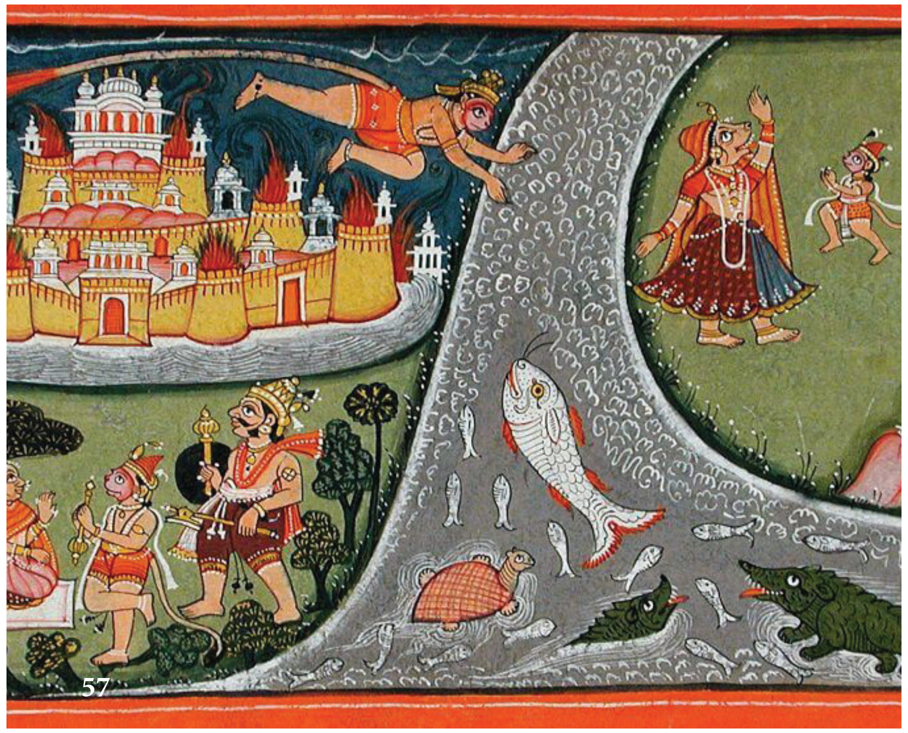
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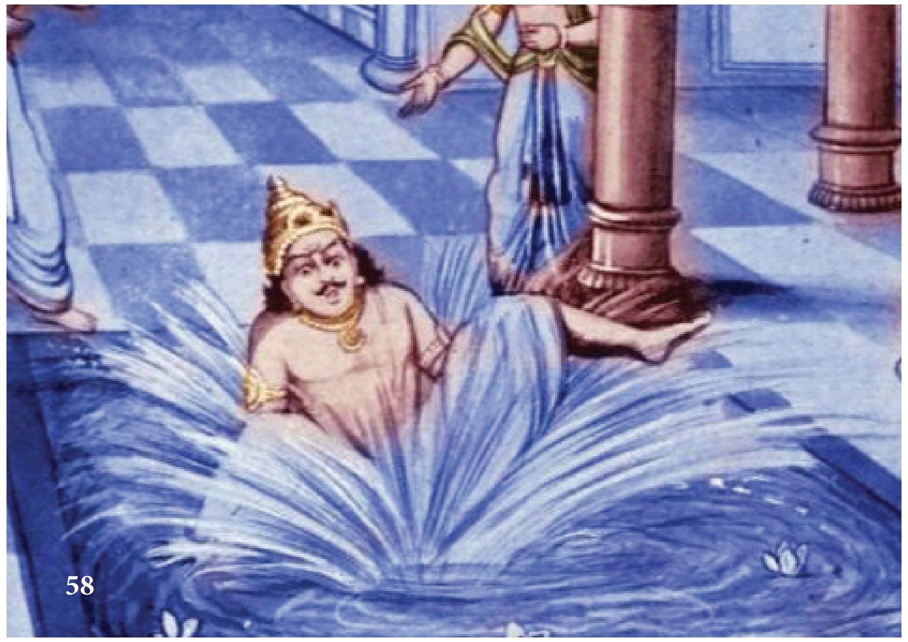
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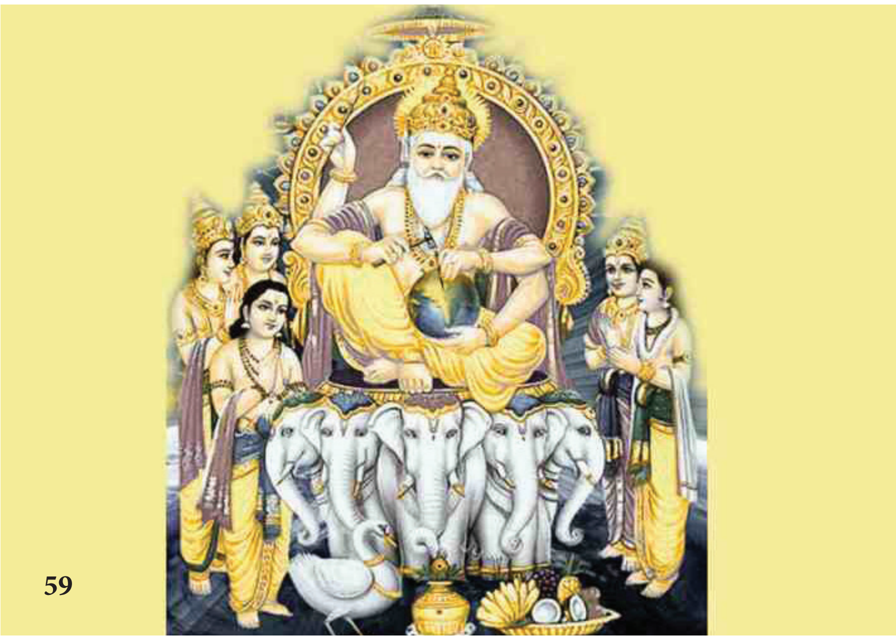
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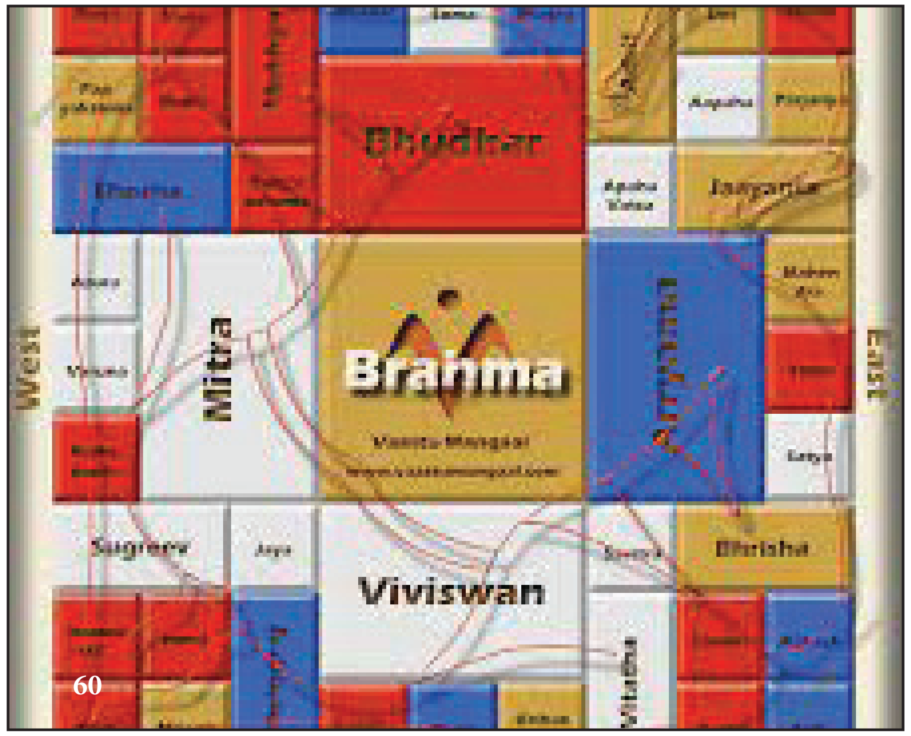

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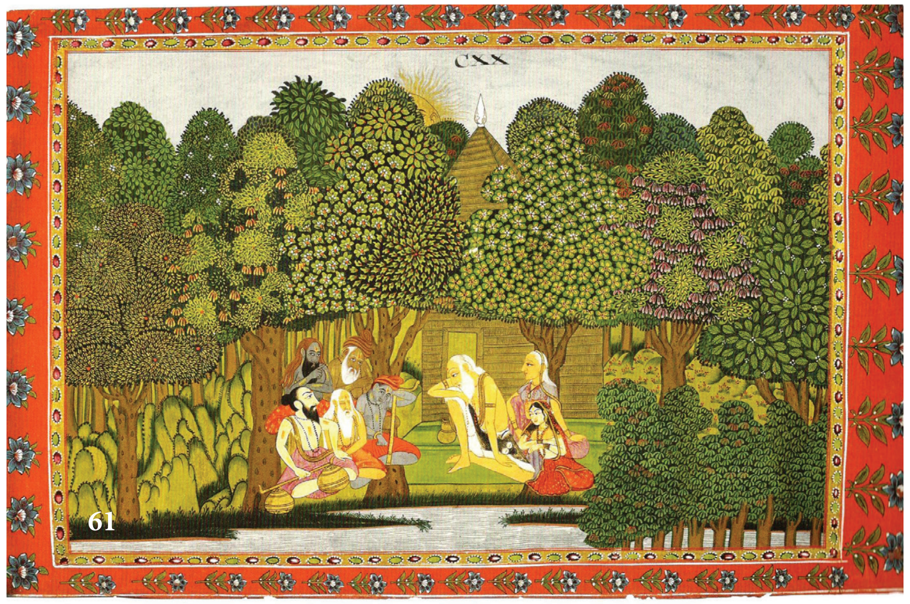

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felt very insulted which became a central theme, and reason, for the Mahabharata war. The imagery of these palaces and kingdoms have been transmitted to us through words, and later through visuals and writing.

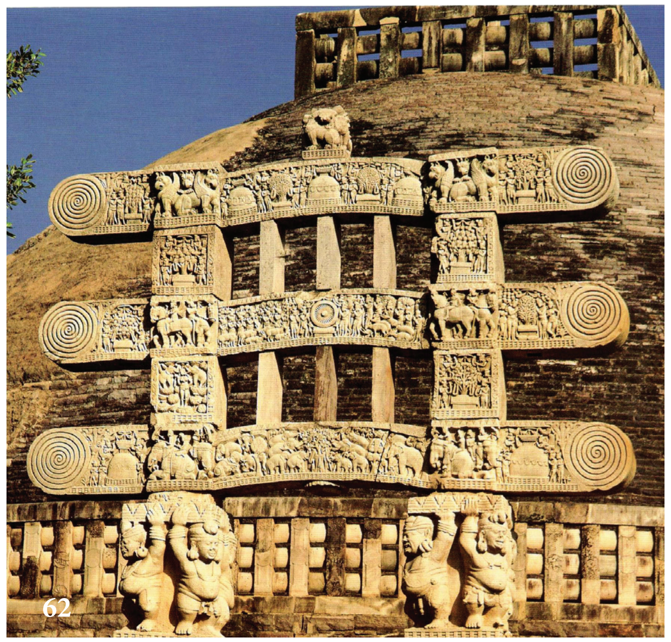
Figure 59.Vishwakarma, in Hindu mythology, the architect of the gods. The name was originally used as an epithet of any powerful god but later came to personify creative power. Vishvakarman is the divine carpenter and master craftsman who fashioned the weapons of the gods and built their cities and chariots. He is the architect of the mythical city Lanka and is also said to have made the great image of Jagannatha at Puri (Orissa). He revealed the sciences of architecture and mechanics to humans and is the patron deity of workers, artisans, and artists. Vastu Purusha is sometimes called an incarnation of Vishwakarma and son of Brahma.

Figure 60: Vastu shastra is considered the ancient Indian tenet of architecture which is based on the Vastu purusha. As narrated in the Matsya Purana, a demon was born from the sweat drops of Shiva. He was very hungry and wanted to eat all the three worlds starting with the earth. Terrified, the 44 gods and the demons arrested him and pinned him to the ground. When he objected, Brahma offered him a compromise and made him immortal with the boon that he would be worshipped by anyone making a building through the vastu purush mandal. The revival of ancient texts in the nineteenth and twentieth century by British and then nationalist scholars has made this subject very popular among Indians today.

Figure 61: After the Indus Valley Civilisation, architecture of the Vedic period (1500 - 500 BC), when most of the vedas were composed, is considered a dark period for architecture as little remains from this period. Almost all of the information one gets is from secondary sources.

Figure 62: After the advent of the Buddha, during the Mauryan period, one finds structures made of permanent materials like bricks and stone. As is customary, they copied the construction details of the earlier buildings. So one can see many wooden construction details replicated in stone. Examples of early huts and village life is also depicted in the carvings.

Figure 63: A charbagh or ‘four gardens’ is the Persian concept of garden with a layout of four gardens traditionally separated by waterways, together representing the four gardens and four rivers of Paradise mentioned in the Quran. This concept has been the subject of many miniature paintings and also the central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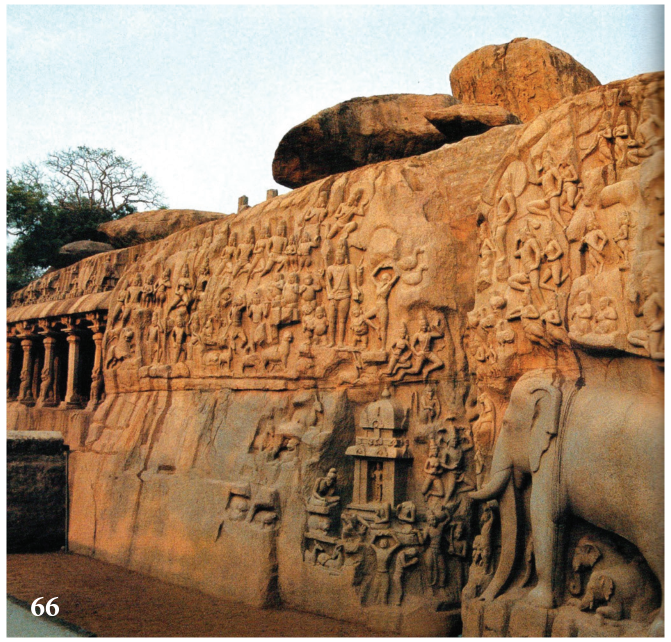
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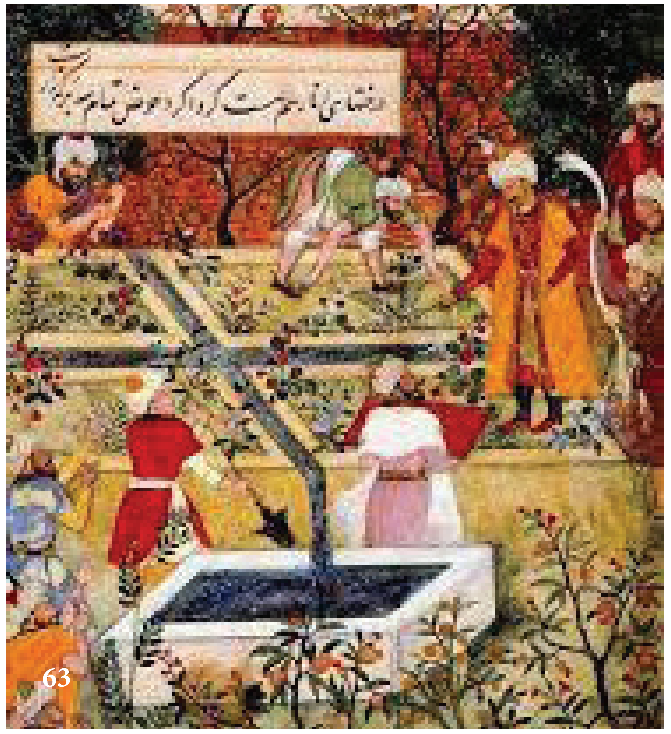
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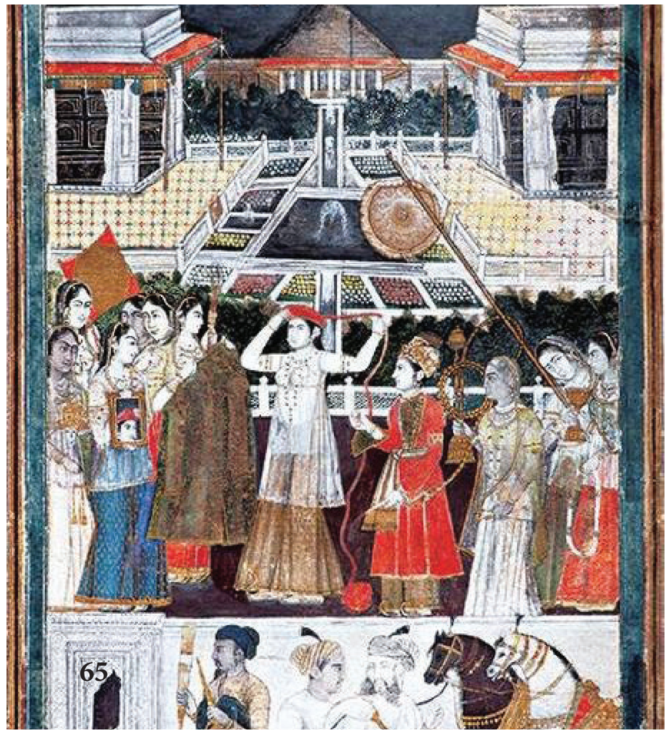
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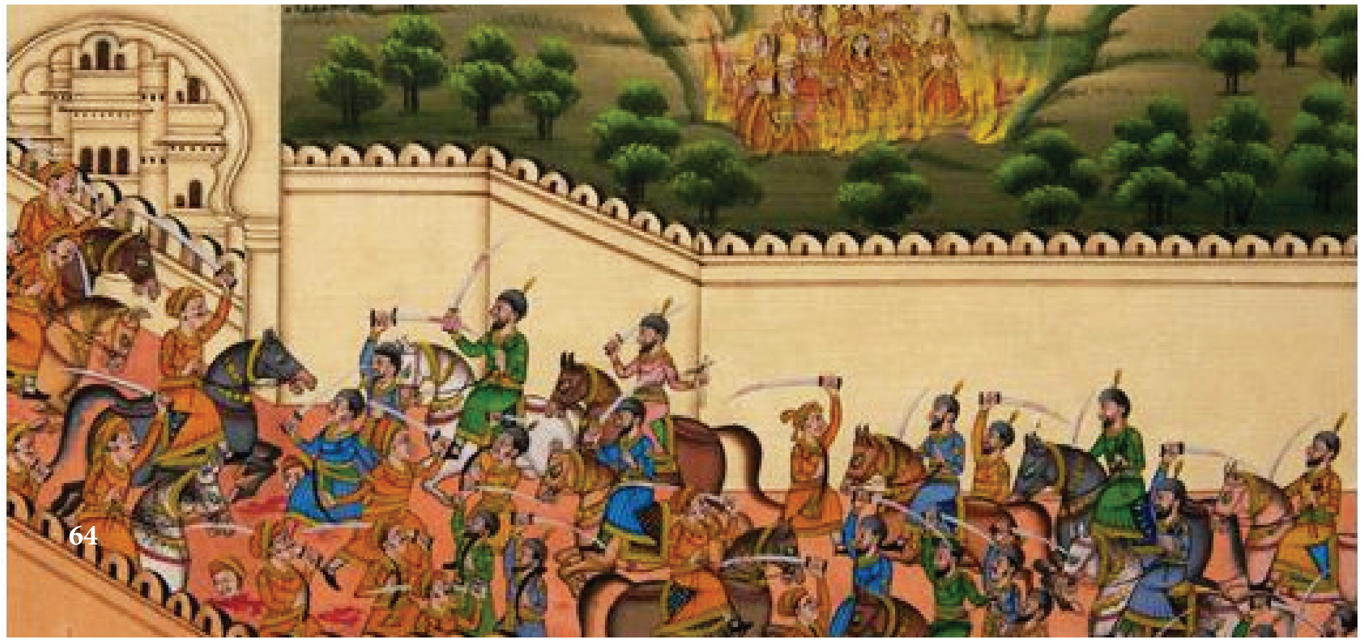
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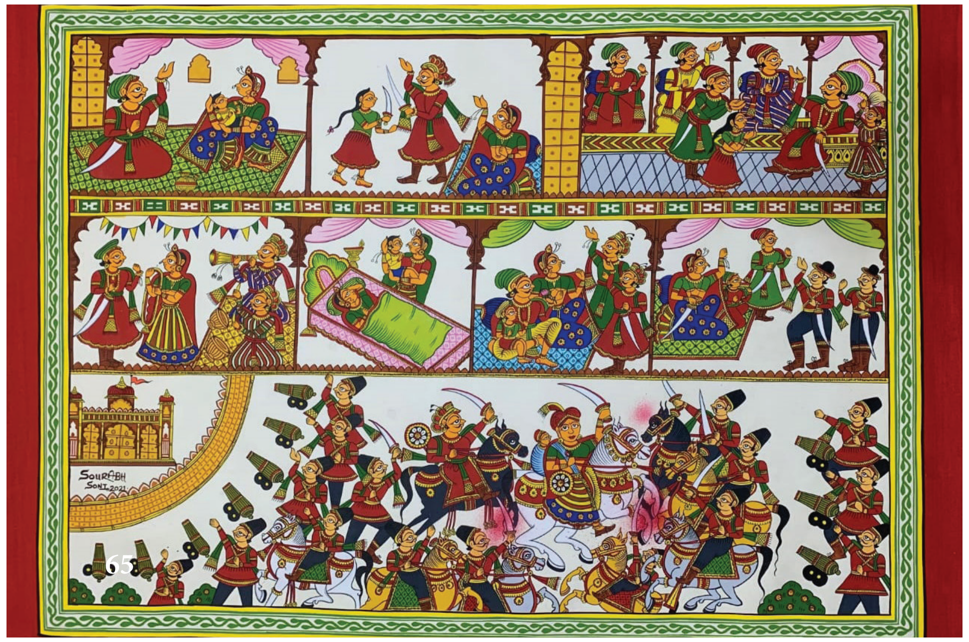
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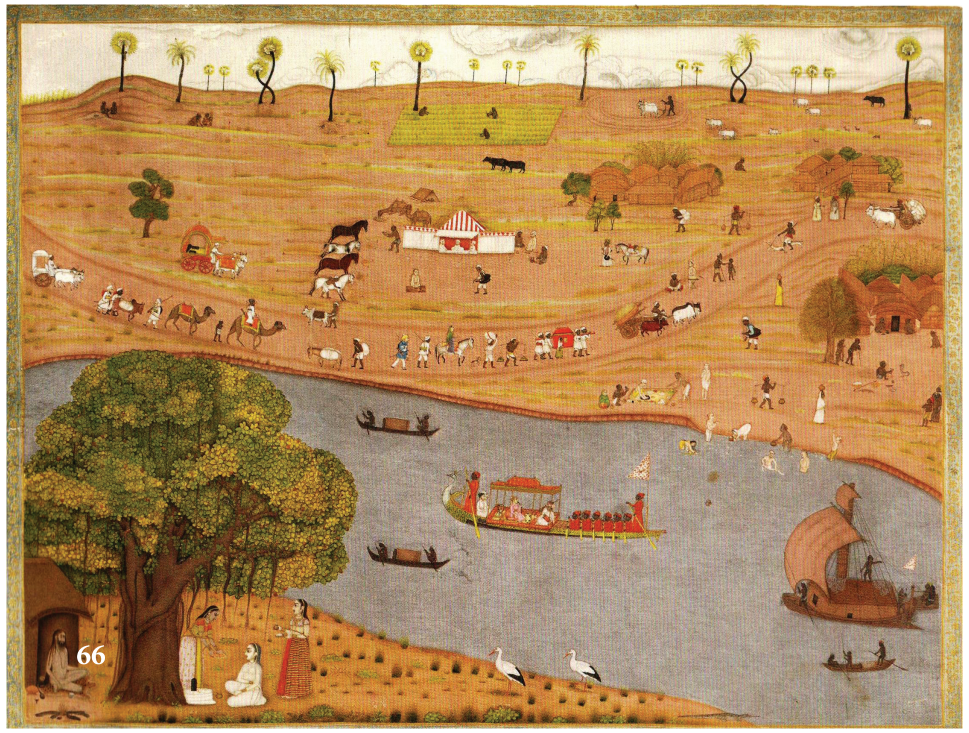
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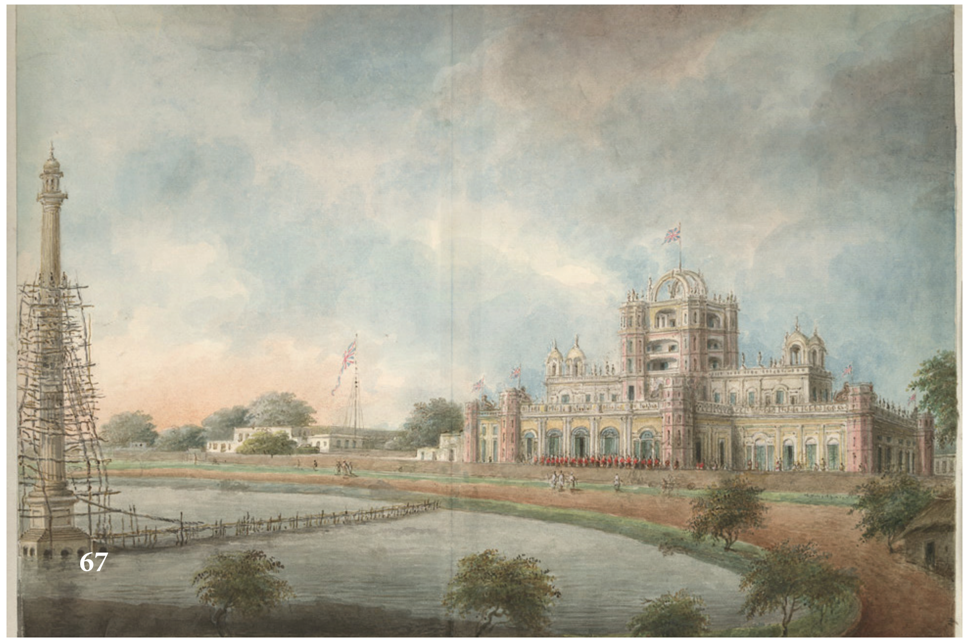
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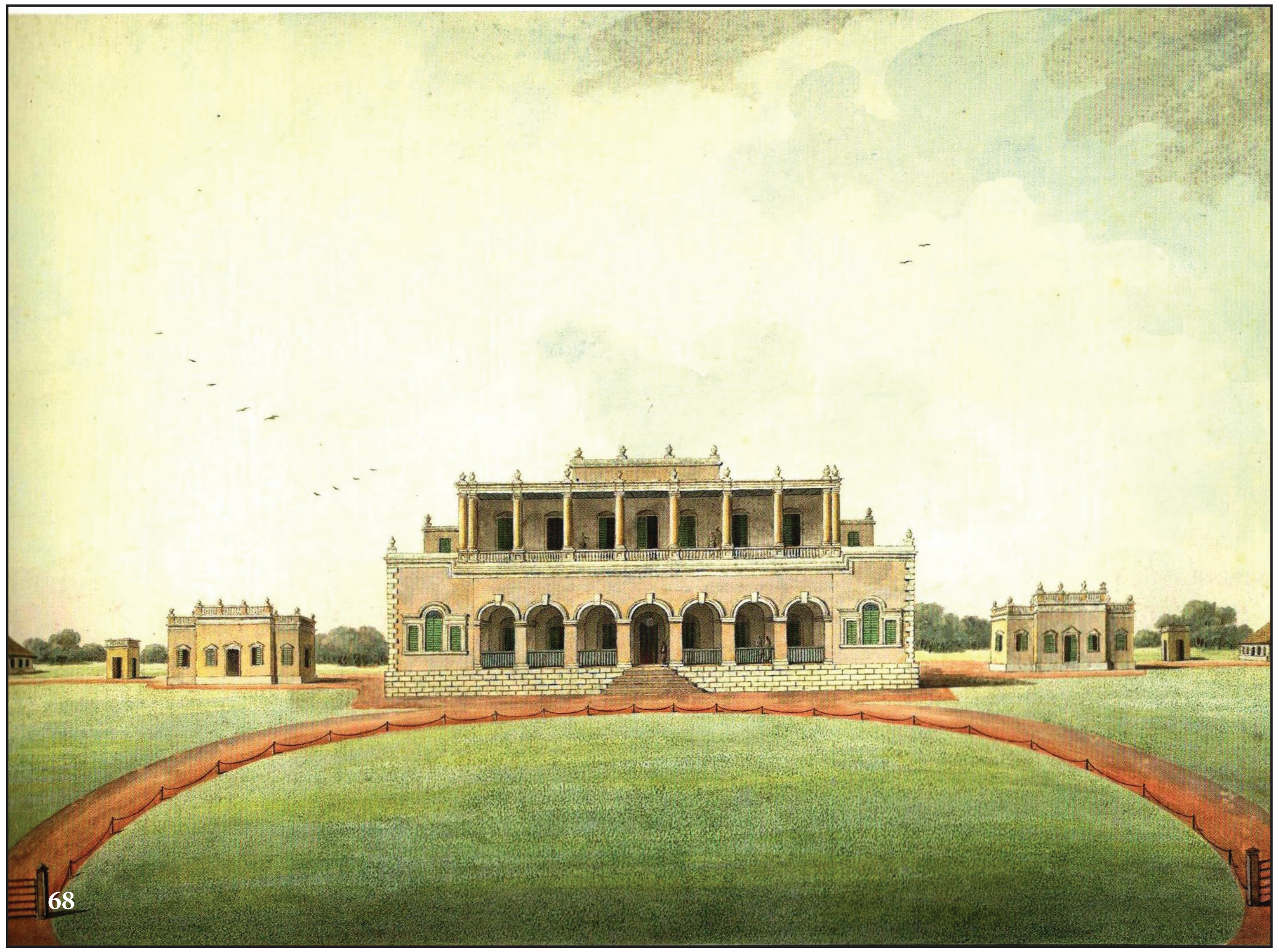
theme of the Mughal gardens and other buildings built during the Mughal period.

Figure 64:Rani Lakshmibai married the Maharaja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao, in 1842. When the Maharaja died in 1853, the British East India Company under Governor-General Lord Dalhousie refused to recognize the claim of his adopted heir and annexed Jhansi under the Doctrine of Lapse. The Rani was unwilling to cede control and joined the rebellion against the British in 1857. She led the successful defense of Jhansi against Company allies, but in early 1858 Jhansi fell to British forces under the command of Hugh Rose. The Rani managed to escape on horseback and joined the rebels in capturing Gwalior, where they proclaimed Nana Saheb as Peshwa of the revived Maratha Empire. She died in June 1858 after being mortally wounded during the British counterattack at Gwalior. She continues to be recognised as a freedom fighter. This story is set around the famous Jhansi Fort.

Figure 65: Padmavati, was a 13th–14th century Rani (queen) of the Mewar kingdom of present-day India. She was an exceptionally beautiful princes Ratan Sen, the Rajput ruler of Chittor Fort, heard about her beauty and won her hand in marriage and brought her to Chittor. Ratan Sen was captured and imprisoned by Alauddin Khalji, the Sultan of Delhi. Khalji laid siege on Chittor to obtain Padmavati. Facing a defeat against Khalji, before Chittor was captured, she and her companions committed Jauhar (self-immolation) thereby defeating Khalji's aim and protecting their honour. Coupled to the Jauhar, the Rajput men died fighting on the battlefield.Many other written and oral tradition versions of her life exist in Hindu and Jain traditions and have been immortalised through Rajasthani miniature paintings.

Figure 66: A river scene of Murshidabad c. 1760 in opaque water colour heightened with gold on paper. Murshidabad was the older capital of Bengal before the british moved it to calcutta.

Figure 67 :In the late 18th and early 19th century, pattern books were transported from one country to another. These helped the 'amateur' architects in designing buildings in different 'styles'. Such buildings were first used in Calcutta and in Lucknow to design European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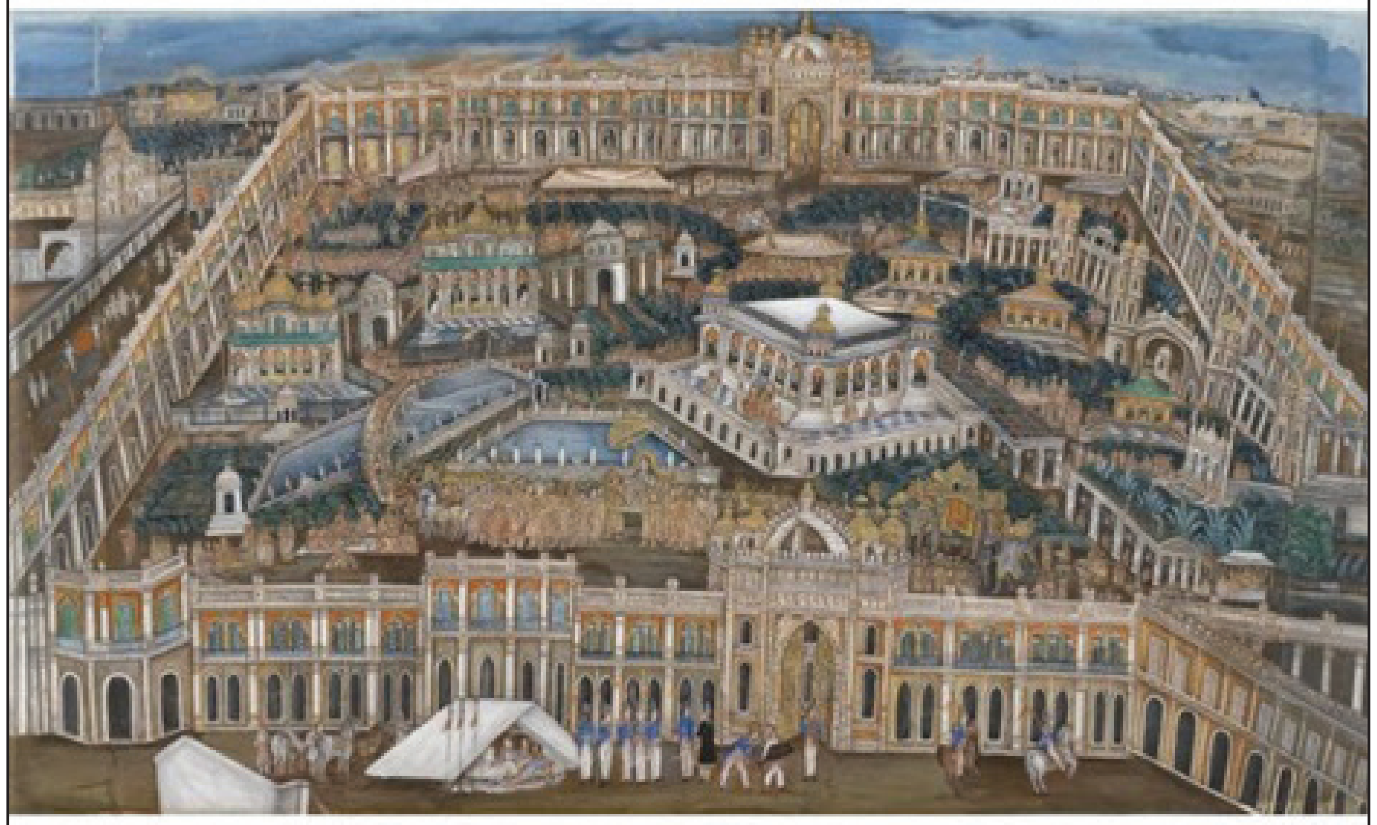
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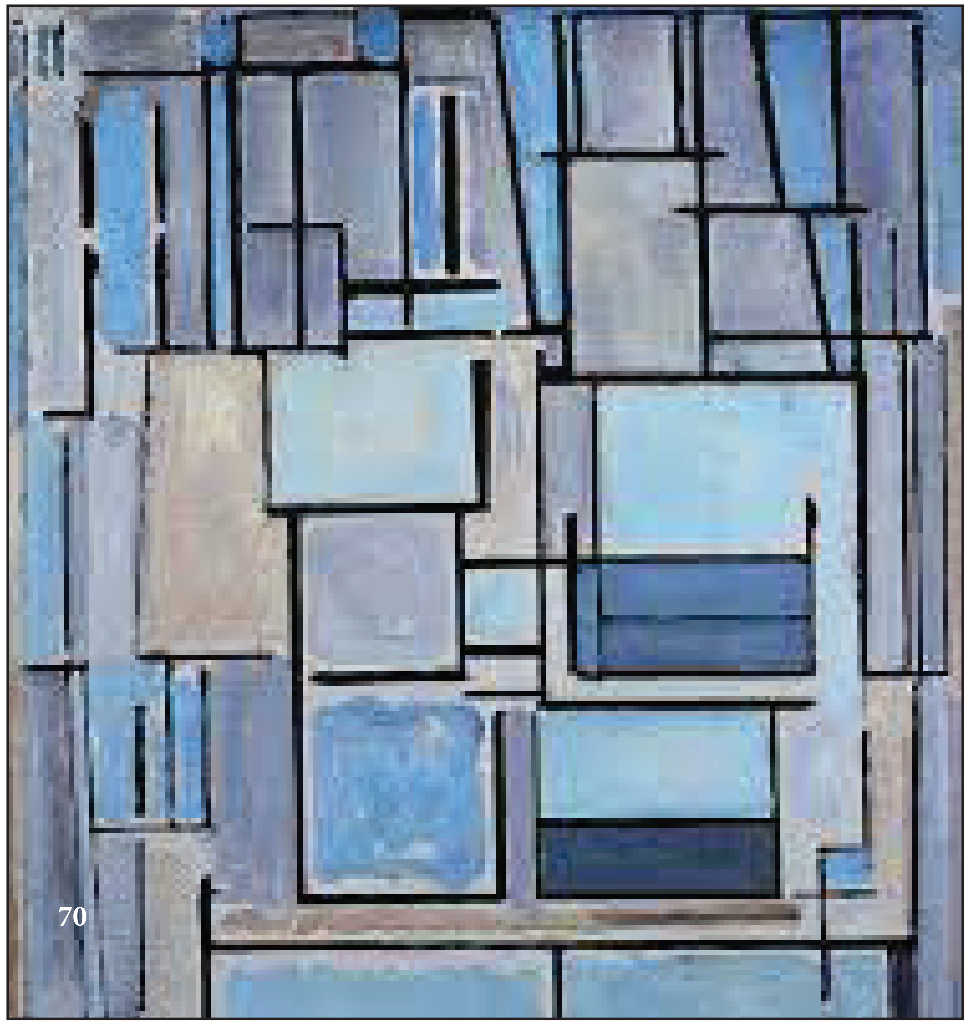
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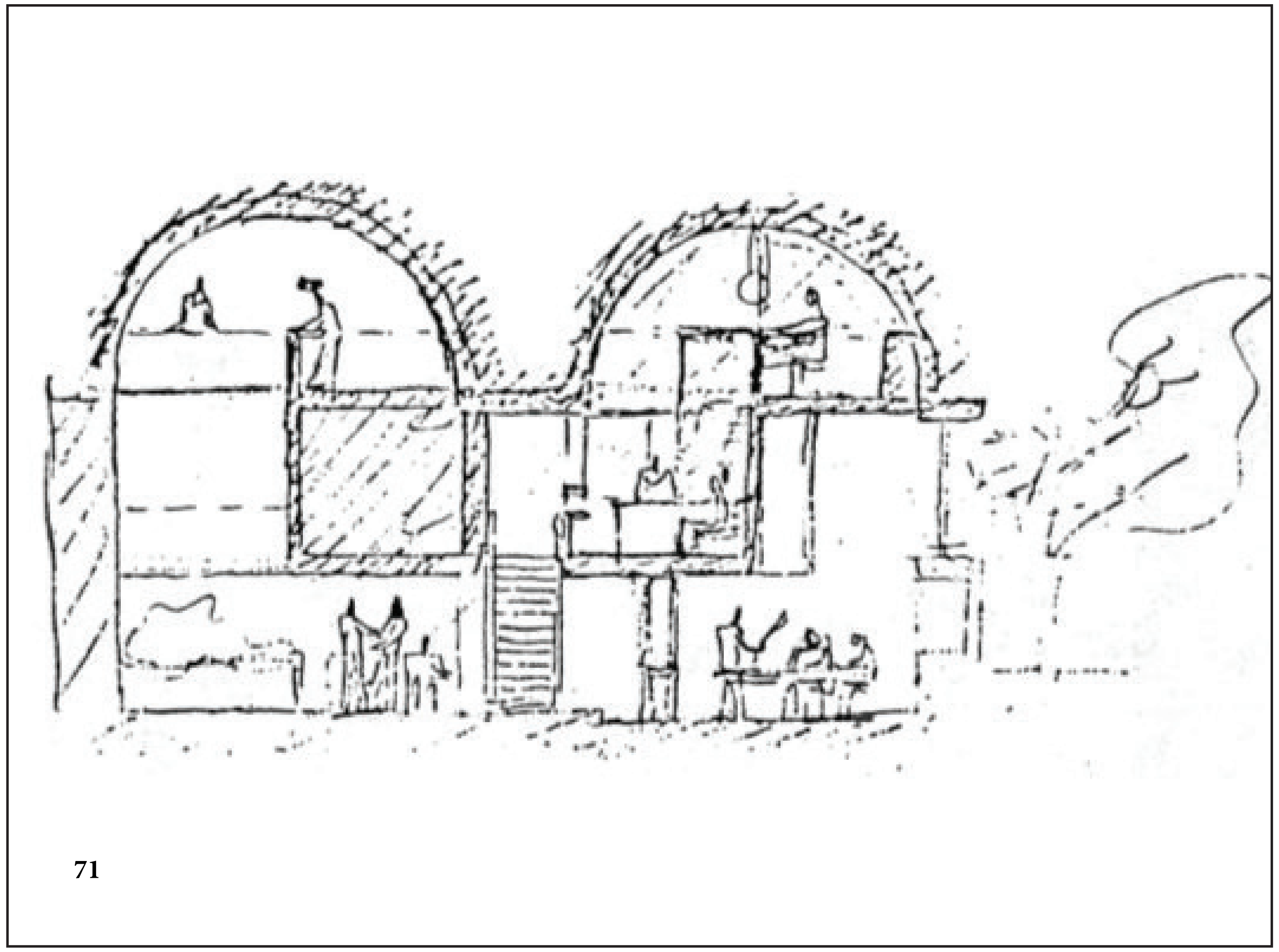
style houses. In times before the camera, these buildings were documented by painters and artists for the owners and sometimes by travellers to record their travels. Hand drawn maps and some building plans and elevations were also made before construction.

Figure 68: South Front of Mr. Prattle's house, Murshdabad c. 1790-1800. Watercolour on paper.

Figure 69: The Kaiserbagh palace was a the largest and only palace complex of Lucknow built by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. However, it was demolished beyond recognition after the war of 1857 by the British. Its beauty and grandeur survives only through old paintings and written descriptions.

Figure 70- 71: Drawings, paintings and sketches are widely used today by architects for designing, documentation, and presentations in both two and three dimensions.

(Source: Unless mentioned, the images have been downloaded from the internet and shall be used for academic purposes only)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